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JACQUES MARITAIN : MAN AND EDUCATOR

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

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BY

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SYNOPSIS

This thesis falls into three parts, Maritain's life and search for truth, the finding of that truth to his own satisfaction, and the spreading of that truth to others seeking it.

In his early life the desire for truth was so strong as to make life without its discovery seem meaningless. The search for it, the resolution to die unless it could be found and the first glimmerings of the possibility of its attainment mark the first part of his life.

The fulfilment of the first promise of success in his search, the discovery of Thomistic philosophy, the dedication of his life to the study of this philosophy and the following of its conclusions to their ultimate end mark the second part of his life.

The third division of his life embraces his desire to spread his findings in philosophy among men. This leads him to an examination of the basic principles of education. He examines the aims of education in the light of his philosophical principles, the various schools of educational thought which differ from his and the means by which errors in these schools may be corrected. The true nature of education, the means by which this education is to be imparted to the learner, and the role of the teacher in the educative process are considered at length.

The organization of the curriculum, the emphasis to be placed on certain subjects and the intellectual development which will result from the application of his basic philosophical principles are outlined in full.

The goal of present-day education in its application to the society of tomorrow occupies the attention of Maritain to a large degree. The whole life of Maritain can be considered as a search for truth and a desire to spread that truth to those who are also seeking it.

CHAPTER 1

EARLY YEARS AND EDUCATION

Some time ago, in an article prepared for the publication Saturday Night, Doctor Scarlett, the Chancellor of the University of Alberta, wrote:

Surely the soul of every sensitive man and woman has been seared by the contemporary revolt against culture, the colossal inhumanity which makes a mockery of all high ideals, the betrayal of the decencies of life, the program against all creative minds, the inquisition that dwarfs those of the past. As witness of this new barbarism there stretch gigantic cemeteries under the moon full of the victims of this awful pestilence.

Confronted with these things it is the business of education to concern itself with something more than matters of buildings and salaries and the "three R's". It must oppose the Enemy with the principles and works of great faith. All true education looks toward the eternities. It must deepen the currents of our great heritage which at the moment are running through beds that are pitifully shallow.... It must concern itself with the good life which has to do first of all, not with institutions, but with the human being itself.... Above all the university in its dual task of teaching and research must be true to its age-old duty of asserting the symbols of truth and beauty, for only in that way will the great split between knowledge and morality be healed and the de-civilizing influence abroad in the world be checked.¹

The thought expressed by Doctor Scarlett that there is need of closing the gap between knowledge and morality, and that it is the duty of education to perform this work has been the subject of much deliberation during the early part of this century.

Among those who have devoted time and effort to the discovery of the needs of the modern world in this respect, and there have been many, none has devoted more unselfish efforts nor brought greater depth of thought and insight

¹E.P. Scarlett, "A Chancellor Pleads for the Humanities", Saturday Night, CLVIII (December 20, 1952), p. 9.

to the task than has Jacques Maritain.

Born in Paris on November 18, 1882, Maritain was the descendant of a family noted for its intellectuality as well as for its fearlessness in the cause of what it considered to be the right. One of the outstanding members of this family was Jules Favre, of whom Mme. Maritain writes:

Jules Favre, a militant democrat, played a very formative role at the beginning of the Third Republic. Under the reign of Napoleon Third, he was in the French Parliament, among the very small number of Opposition deputies. He succeeded Victor Cousin in the French Academy; he was an orator of preeminent excellence and an advocate of lost causes, a great patriot on whose shoulders fell the sad mission of defending the interests of France before the conqueror of 1870. He was sufficiently eloquent and persuasive to convince Bismarck that the German army entering Paris after the siege should at least not enter the Place de la Concorde, and that it should not occupy the city for longer than two days.¹

The love of liberty, the preoccupation with the future of mankind, and the disregard for the opinions of others in the face of his own convictions which mark the career of Maritain were seen in Mme. Maritain's description of the character of his mother.

...as I came better to know Jacques' mother, I could admire in her a religious loyalty to the passionate ideal which animated the republican opposition under the Empire, an indomitable spirit of liberty, a fervent hope for the spiritual future of mankind, a boldness in her defiance of the world's opinion and a granite firmness - all of which never changed with the passage of time, but which a youthfulness renewed by the ardour of great age informed with sweetness.²

It was from such sources as these that Maritain gained his love for humanity and his sense of dedication to the welfare of mankind. From his father he inherited a spirit of leisurely study, of whom Mme. Maritain says, "He loved Burgundy, the rather slow, scholarly and comfortable life one led there, and he was astounded at his son's being a philosopher."³

¹Raissa Maritain, We Have Been Friends Together, trans. Julie Kernan (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940), p. 49.

²Ibid. p. 49.

³Ibid. p. 50.

Maritain's early education was received at the Lycée Henri IV. There he formed a friendship with Ernest Psichari, the grandson of Ernest Renan, a friendship which endured until the death of Psichari in battle in August, 1914, and which contributed greatly to the spiritual development of both young men.

From his earliest years as a student, Maritain was obsessed by a desire to find the answer to the riddle of life. This he sought at first in philosophy, only to discover that the answer was not there.

Even when he was only sixteen and was taking a course in philosophy at the Lycée Henri IV under M. Dereux... young Jacques would hurl himself in despair on the rug in his room, because to all his questions - there was no answer.¹

From the Lycée Henri IV, Maritain entered the Sorbonne. There he met his future wife, Raissa Oumansoff, to whom we are indebted for the intimate sketches of Maritain, and for the account of their struggle toward the answer to the problem, the meaning of life.

I was leaving M. Matruchot's plant physiology class one day in a rather downcast frame of mind, when I saw coming toward me a young man with a gentle face, a heavy shock of blond hair, a light beard and a slightly stoop-shouldered carriage. He introduced himself and said he was forming a committee of students to start a movement of protest among French writers and university people against the ill-treatment to which Russian Socialist students had been subject in their own country.... Such was my first meeting with Jacques Maritain.²

In this young girl Maritain had met a kindred spirit, one who was athirst with the desire to know the underlying principles of things, and to be assured that the discoveries of physical science did not exhaust man's ability to know reality.

That Mme. Maritain had the same problem as Maritain himself concerning the existence of truth is apparent from her words; "Jacques Maritain had the same concerns as I, the same questions tormented him, the same desire for truth

¹Ibid. p. 67.

²Ibid. p. 40.

wholly moved him."¹

The desire to know something of the reality which lay outside the scope of the physical sciences had led Maritain to take courses in philosophy at the Lycée and again at the Sorbonne. In each school he was disappointed in the results of his courses, failing to find in them the answers to the questions he considered most important. His future wife was his companion in this search for truth, and since she attended the same courses as did Maritain, her testimony in the matter expresses the experience and opinion of Maritain. She wrote of this period:

The philosophers of the Faculté des Lettres whose courses we took were personally men of great merit; their learning was broad and deep, and they were keenly alive to the demands of scientific research. But they bent their energies, as to their main task, to the endless analysis of the detail of historical matters, reducing almost to this alone that study of wisdom which their name and their philosophical profession imposed upon them as a duty. Their whole learning was in the direction of historical erudition, or toward the mathematical sciences. In none of them did we find rooted a positive theory of knowledge; the conclusions which they believe they could formulate provisionally, under the influence of the rationalistic and idealistic tradition to which they still clung, fell into dust under the influence of a positivism and an empiricism which were at once dogmatic and ineffectual.²

It is true that the teachers of the courses were technically philosophers, but in philosophy itself they had lost all hope. They were more concerned with the history of philosophy than with the findings of philosophy, and, in consequence, made history a queen among the sciences, an heir-ess to all the rights of repudiated metaphysics. Of this tendency among the philosophers, and of its result on the students, Mme. Maritain has this to say:

Through some curious de facto contradictions, they sought to verify everything by processes of material learning and of positive verification, and yet they despaired of truth, whose very name was unlovely to

¹Ibid. p. 67.

²Ibid. p. 67.

them and could be used only between the quotation marks of a disillusioned smile. The tragedy to which they were victims was this; that a high degree of intellectual detachment, a profound honesty of spirit in them became twisted into a distrust of the simplicity of loftier truths, which they considered to be naive simplifications arising from the image-making functions of language. All in all, the only practical lesson to be had from their conscientious and disinterested instruction was a lesson in integral relativism, intellectual skepticism, and - if one was logical - in moral nihilism. So young men finished their philosophical studies as knowledgeable and intelligent youths who had no confidence in ideas except as instruments of rhetoric, and who were completely unprepared for the combats of the mind and the conflicts of the world.¹

To intellectual persons such as they were, anxiously seeking the meaning of reality and disappointed in the answers they obtained from the philosophy of their day, this feeling of frustration was intolerable. It was in this state of mind that they entered a favorite place of meditation, the Jardin des Plantes. Mme. Maritain describes the scene:

Before leaving the Jardin des Plantes we reached a solemn decision which brought us some peace; to look sternly in the face, even to the ultimate consequence - insofar as it would be in our power - the facts of that unhappy and cruel universe, wherein the sole light was the philosophy of skepticism and relativism.

We would accept no concealment, no cajolery from persons of consequence, asleep in their false security. The epicureanism they proposed was a snare, just as was sad stoicism; and estheticism - that was mere amusement. Neither did we wish, because the Sorbonne had spoken, to consider that the last word had been said. The French university world was then so hermetically sealed within itself that by the very thinking of this simple thought we showed some little merit.

Thus we decided for some time longer to have confidence in the unknown; we would extend credit to existence, look upon it as an experiment to be made, in the hope that to our ardent plea, the meaning of life would reveal itself, that new values would stand forth so clearly that they would enlist our total allegiance, and deliver us from the nightmare of a sinister and useless world.

But if the experiment should not be successful, the solution would be suicide; suicide before the years had accumulated their dust, before our youthful strength was spent. We wanted to die by a free act if it were impossible to live according to the truth.²

It was through their friendship with the writer Charles Péguy that some hope came to the disillusioned Maritains. He took them to hear the lec-

¹Ibid. p. 68.

²Ibid. p. 77.

tures of the brilliant philosopher Henri Bergson. Bergson was then lecturing at the Collège de France, an institution which was viewed with some misgivings by the faculty of the Sorbonne. Mme. Maritain writes of this attitude, saying:

... a mountain of prejudice and of distrust existed between these two institutions particularly so on the part of the Sorbonne philosophers with respect to Bergson's teaching.¹

It was while listening to Bergson that the Maritains first understood that they might yet come to know something of the nature and existence of truth.

Someone I know well wrote much later that "man is an animal who feeds upon transcendentals". In different terms Bergson assured us that such food was within our reach, that we are capable of truly knowing reality, that through intuition we may attain to the absolute; and we interpreted this as saying that we could truly, absolutely know what is.²

The particular value of this contact with Bergson to the Maritains was not so much his philosophical system, which they could not accept as answering all their questions; it was rather the realization that a thinker of the highest calibre acknowledged the possibility of the existence of the absolute, and the possession by man of some faculty or power by which he could come in contact with this reality.

Indeed, Maritain was later to break with Bergson on the question of the nature of this power and its proper function. To the Maritains, however, the mere acknowledgement of such a faculty opened the doors to unlimited speculations and hopes. They felt that there might be an answer to the riddle of life, and considered it a strict duty to seek to know the reality of things with all their ability.

While yet filled with enthusiasm for the new-found truth, the Maritains made another contact which was to have a profound influence on their lives. Léon Bloy, a writer with whose work they became acquainted by reading a review

¹Ibid. p. 79.

²Ibid. p. 83.

of Bloy's writings written by Maurice Materlinck, became their friend. Through this review, and their interest in his works, the Maritains made his acquaintance. Their contact with this man placed them, for the first time, in an atmosphere in which they met the Catholic culture and faith exemplified in the life of a good man. It was in the agonized writings of this man, Bloy, that they first were placed in contact with a possible solution of their search for truth.

Ignorant as we were both of Judaism and Christianity, we could not, when we first read these pages, have understood all of Léon Bloy's complex symbolism. But its beauty was obvious. And these lamentations of a heart made disconsolate by injustice, these aspirations toward the glory of truth - were they not to some degree present in us, sufficiently so for us to recognize them in the heart of the sorrowful old writer?¹

It was again the passionate seeking after truth that led them toward a belief in God as the ultimate truth. It was not an easy step to take, with their education and the traditions of the time. It was no easy thing for them to accept the God Who was so far from the ideals of their associates and their former professors. They felt that it was possible that they would find the same empty betrayal in this that they had experienced so many times before. However, it would have been against their nature to fail to make every effort to find the truth they had so ardently sought in so many other ways.

I would like to note, however, that Jacques later told me that everything had changed for him when thinking that it was fair to put to a test by an act of the soul the promises of the unknown God, he started praying in the following way. "My God, if You exist, and if You are the truth, make me know it", and one day decided to kneel down and recite the Lord's Prayer for the first time.²

The doubts and hesitations of this period were a sore trial to the Maritains. Not the least of their distress came from the thought that their contemplated step would separate them from the people and the world they knew.

¹Ibid. p. 135.

²Ibid. p. 144.

It meant the acceptance of separation - for how long a time? - from our parents and the comrades of our youth whose lack of understanding we thought would be total (and indeed it was in many cases)...

Finally, we already felt like "the filth of the world" when we thought of the disapproval of those we loved. Jacques remained despite everything so persuaded by the errors of the "philosophers", that he thought that in becoming a Catholic he would have utterly to forswear the intellectual life.¹

These thoughts were a severe trial to both Jacques Maritain and to his wife. Maritain had always shown a deep affection for all his friends, and a touching response to suffering of any sort. To think that his deliberate act was to bring sorrow and shame, for so he considered the probable reaction to his conversion, to his many friends and especially to his own people, was, for him, a supreme suffering.

Not the least of his mental agony came from the thought that his life of study and intellectual curiosity would be at an end.

We still thought that to become Christian meant to abandon philosophy forever. Well, we were ready - but it was not easy - to abandon philosophy for the truth. The truth we had so greatly desired had caught us in a trap. "If it has pleased God to hide His truth in a dunghill", said Jacques, "that is where we shall go to find it."¹

On June 11, 1906, the Maritains were baptized. In August of the same year they went to Germany to study the state of biological science in that country. They held themselves aloof from the other students at Heidelberg. During these days they became better acquainted with the new state into which they had entered. It was a time of readjustment, a time which they spent in exploration of every avenue opened by their new proximity to the truth. In the investigation of these new avenues, far from the feared sterility in matters philosophical, they found new and wider horizons for their intellectual curiosity. Mme. Maritain writes of those days:

I see in Jacques' diary that a bare month after our arrival in Heidelberg, we, who had believed that we should have to forswear philosophy, began already to see the possibility of a "restitution of the Reason, of

¹Ibid. p. 175.

which metaphysics is the essential and highest operation.... We must now know what we want", Jacques wrote, "and it is to philosophize truly."¹

The reaction of the families of the Maritains which they had foreseen was not long in being realized to the full. Their conversion had been reported by the ubiquitous "friend", and Maritain hastened to Paris from Heidelberg to explain away some of the misunderstanding and hurt which their parents felt. Though Madame Maritain's parents were amenable to the explanations offered, Jacques' mother remained for a long time unable to see the wisdom or the necessity for such a step on the part of her son.

Maritain was not long in coming in contact with some of the results of his conversion. In 1907, having returned from Germany after finishing his biological studies, he was ready to accept the chair in philosophy at one of the French state lycees. This was his by right of his agregation. However, the spirit of the times, one of strong anti-clericalism, made him fear that he would not be absolutely free to teach according to his convictions as a Christian and a philosopher. As a result, he gave up his career as a teacher in the state universities.

To provide the bare necessities of life, Maritain was obliged to associate himself with the publishing firm of Maison Hachette. There he spent some years preparing lexicons and dictionaries and, at the same time, enjoying a liberty of mind in regard to the philosophical problems which confronted him.

A slow ripening process was thus made possible, during which the principal outlines of a philosophy of being and of spirit took shape before his eyes, and also the conviction that truth attained in any degree whatever of reality should be the friend and companion of the truth in any other degree of being.²

Along with this testimony of his wife, Maritain himself writes, as she quotes in her book, Adventures in Grace:

¹Ibid. p. 175.

²Ibid. p. 202.

My philosophical reflections leaned upon the indestructable truth of objects presented by faith in order to restore the natural order of the intelligence to being, and to recognize the ontological bearing of the work of reason. Thenceforth, in affirming to myself, without chicanery or diminution, the authentic value of reality of our human instruments of knowledge, I was already a Thomist without knowing it. When, several months later, I was to come to the *Summa Theologica*, I would erect no obstacle to its luminous flood.¹

From 1909 to 1913 Maritain spent his time working for the firm of Maison Hachette preparing a Dictionary of Practical Life, while his private studies were devoted to Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas as well as to the reading of contemporary scholastic authors. In 1909 he published the results of his biological studies in Germany, thus acquitting himself of the obligation incurred as the recipient of the Michonis fellowship. In 1910 he wrote his first philosophical study, La Science Moderne et la Raison. In it he criticized the tragic state to which reason had come. It is the first essay in the volume, Antimoderne, which was collected and published in 1923. In 1911 Maritain wrote a long article for the *Revue de Philosophie*, entitled L'Evolutionnisme Bergsonien. This article outlined the criticisms which the Bergsonian system called for from the viewpoint of Thomistic philosophy.

In 1912 Maritain began the first year of his philosophy courses at the college Stanislas, meeting opposition from the other members of the faculty because of his determination to present Thomistic philosophy. The fire with which he presented his teachings was looked upon as the fervor of a beginner in a new and interesting system. The members of the faculty who feared repercussions from the intellectual world were reassured by the thought that this phase would pass as the new professor became more mature.

Maritain himself wrote several years later that it did not pass, on the contrary, it had become with time more tenacious and more determined, although it lost the useless harshness of youth and inexperience.

¹Raissa Maritain, Adventures in Grace, trans. Julie Kernan (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1944), p. 4.

...précisément cette "ardeur des néophytes" qui passera, mon ami, qui passera, lui disait un jour le vénérable directeur d'un établissement d'éducation ecclésiastique - eh non! Elle n'a pas passé, elle est devenue, au contraire, avec le temps, plus tenace, et plus déterminée, tout en perdant, ¹il l'espère du moins, l'inutile âpreté de la jeunesse et de l'inexpérience.

In these courses Maritain inspired the hearers with a love of learning and a desire to find the solution to the problems which had filled his own student days with so much heart-searching and anxiety. He bent all his energy to setting forth the subjects on the programme and the problems of contemporary philosophy in the light of the principles of St. Thomas, and in so doing, he set the pattern for the great work of his life, the interpretation of contemporary problems in the light of these doctrines.

For him, the teachings of St. Thomas were the exposition of the truth which he had sought for so long. For him, there were no questions bothering the minds and the intellects of the present generation which did not have their solution in the doctrines formulated so long ago. There was no field of intellectual investigation which did not have relationship with the truth which is one, and, therefore, it was true that the harmonizing of truth into unity was a work which could and should be done.

In 1930 Maritain became connected with the Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto, Canada. During the Second World War he was visiting professor at Columbia University in New York, and also at Princeton University. After the war ended he returned to France and received the appointment of Ambassador to the Vatican, in which position he served from 1945 until 1948. He then occupied the chair of Philosophy at Princeton University from which position he retired recently. He still continues to publish essays and articles in the familiar trend of relating present day topics to the teaching of Thomistic philosophy.

¹Jacques Maritain, Antimoderne, Editions de La Revue des Jeunes, (Paris: Desclée et Cie.), p. 14.

CHAPTER II

PHILOSOPHY OF MARITAIN

All his life Maritain had sought the meaning of life and the certainty of the existence of reality and truth. While attending the lectures of Bergson, he realized the existence of a power in the human mind capable of attaining knowledge of this reality and truth. To him, it seemed clear that this truth was within the domain of the philosopher, and that those who bore the name of philosopher had the obligation of knowing this truth and of transmitting it to those who sought it.

Though he was much taken with Bergson's philosophy in the beginning, he could not find in it a clear-cut explanation of the nature of reality, at least one which would satisfy him. Nor could he be satisfied with the method Bergson used, one which failed to state clearly that his system was the absolute truth. On both these points he broke with Bergson, though later he admitted that he had missed the purpose of Bergson's failure to speak with all authority.

Bergson's philosophy held that experience was reality, and reality experience. To know reality it is necessary to consult experience. Experience is what we experience it to be, thus it is subjective in its interpretation. This Maritain found hard to accept, since he was seeking a reality which was absolute and not the result of subjective interpretation. To Bergson, the experiences which man undergoes are all interpreted in the light of practical problems, and in this Bergson's philosophy is pragmatic. Bergson held that our contact with experience is remembered, somewhat in the nature of the Freud-

ian unconscious, being recalled and connected with immediate experience for the purpose of solving present problems. All knowledge of experience, to Bergson, is useful. Maritain would have liked to think that there is a knowledge of the absolute truth which is not immediately useful, but to be known for itself.

To Bergson, the intelligence of man falsifies the experiences in their essential nature by adapting them to the useful, and to know man in himself, the intelligible interpretation would have to be corrected so that these useful features would be ignored. Maritain thought that man had a power by which he could know truth directly, or at least, without making the adjustments necessary in the Bergsonian system. Bergson did not deny the possibility of man knowing truth, but for this he posited intuition, necessary since man, through his intelligence, was interpreting reality in a particular way and for a particular purpose. Maritain thought this a debasement of the power of the intellect. To explain the existence of matter, Bergson posited the élan vital, an active principle which was struggling against a resistance which it itself creates. This doctrine of the élan vital raised questions on a metaphysical level which Maritain did not consider properly answered by Bergson's philosophy.

From this philosophy of Bergson, Maritain had hoped to be led to the clear knowledge of reality, the essence of things. This hope was not realized. He writes:

In the days when I, in company with the little group associated with Charles Péguy and George Sorel, enthusiastically followed Bergson's lectures at the Collège de France, what we looked for was the revelation of a new metaphysics, and it was that which the lecturer himself seemed to promise us.

This was not the case, in reality. Bergson did not give us that metaphysics; he never intended to do so. And for many among us that was a very vivid disappointment; it seemed to us that a promise on which we had

relied had not been kept.¹

Maritain admits later that the object of Bergson was not to give his students a ready-made metaphysics, but rather to arouse in them a realization of the need of metaphysics, leaving the road open for them to formulate their own, or to discover a system which would satisfy their newly-felt need. He writes of this:

And nothing is perhaps more moving than that species of detachment with which he freely let that desire, once aroused, travel its own road, in the minds of everyone, and lead some to the metaphysics which was not his metaphysics, which was even directly opposed to his metaphysics, until there should be, on deeper terms, relating not so much to philosophic conceptualization as to the spiritual directives of philosophy, new meetings of the mind.²

Maritain was one of those who could not follow the lead of the master in the formulating of metaphysics. To him the metaphysics of Bergson was irrational. He writes of this:

Faced with the contradictions and the fluctuations of abstract knowledge, experience alone (as though it itself were not inevitably indicated in abstract knowledge) - experience alone in his eyes had any philosophic value. Hence if experience - an experience more profound than the experience of the laboratory sciences - seems to admit me to the presence of a creative time and a change which is substance and a duration which is a kind of pure act in becoming, well then, let logic and the principle of identity and all the rational requirements of the intelligence perish as they must.³

It was in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas that Maritain found the system of metaphysics he considered to be the true one. Bergson had done what he had set out to do. He had led Maritain to a metaphysics which satisfied him as the explanation of the nature of reality, and from that time on Maritain considered that his duty was not only to accept this system as his own, but also to spread its teachings to others. Speaking of himself in the third per-

¹J. Maritain, Ransoming the Time, trans. Lorin Binsse (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), p. 53.

²Ibid. p. 53.

³Ibid. p. 66.

son in the work Antimoderne, he makes use of the phrase "vae mihi, si non thomistizavero", "unfortunate am I, if I do not preach Thomism". This was to be his vocation.

Mais lorsqu'il écrit cet article sur La Science Moderne et la Raison, il avait retrouvé, grâce à l'Ange de l'Ecole, dont l'amplissime doctrine avait achevé de guérir du bergsonisme, et venait de lui manifester sa vocation intellectuelle (vae mihi, si non thomistizavero!) comme un nouveau printemps philosophique - à la vérité il n'était pas encore très avancé en âge - et une nouvelle ardeur de pensée:¹

This, then, was to be his vocation, the interpretation of the problems of the modern world in the light of the truths found in St. Thomas. That he had found these truths, and that he believed that they were the long-sought absolutes, we can judge from the manner in which he speaks of Thomistic philosophy:

Quant à la pensée de saint Thomas, de laquelle on s'efforce de s'inspirer dans le présent livre, elle n'est pas la pensée d'un siècle ni d'une secte - ceux qui ne voient en elle que l'accident historique et les particularités du hic et nunc montrent par là qu'ils la considèrent avec les sens plus qu'avec l'intellect. Elle est, en réalité, une pensée universelle et perdurable, - élaborée d'abord par la raison naturelle de l'humanité - devenue après cela sagesse supérieure et consciente d'elle-même dans l'intelligence de l'Eglise - puis liée et formée en doctrine, définie, formulée un jour par un homme, au temps fixé, par le docteur élu, parce que, d'une part, toute sagesse rationnelle doit pouvoir être formée en doctrine d'autant plus fermement jointe et membrée, qu'elle est plus large, et parce que, d'autre part, il est conforme à notre condition humaine que nous soyons instruit dans la science par un maître humain; mais cette doctrine a été formulée par saint Thomas d'Aquin non pas comme sienne, tout au contraire comme indépendante de lui-même, et commune: comme le bien commun dont Thomas n'était que le fidèle économe, comme la sagesse commune dont il n'était que l'agent de transmission - sagesse qui, désormais formée, pourra, sans fin, croître et se développer, et s'assimiler toute vérité, vetera novis augere: car étant spirituelle elle n'est pas soumise à la nécessité du vieillissement et de la mort.... Par son universalité même, elle déborde infiniment, dans le passé comme dans l'avenir, l'étroitesse du moment présent; elle ne s'oppose pas aux systèmes modernes comme le passé à l'actuellement donné, mais comme éternel au momentané. Antimoderne contre les erreurs du temps présent, elle est ultramoderne pour toutes les vérités enveloppées dans le temps à venir.²

¹Jacques Maritain, Antimoderne, p. 13.

²Ibid. p. 15.

This, then, was the guide and the deposit of truth for which Maritain had searched in vain in the modern philosophies of the Sorbonne and the leading exponents of philosophical theory of his day.

Maritain was perfectly well aware that he would be called upon to defend his choice of an authority such as St. Thomas to the many friends who were deeply interested in the search for truth. His intellectual colleagues, as well as his philosophical opponents, all would desire, would even demand, that he show them the wisdom of his choice. No better defender of scholastic teaching could have been found, and he advanced to the task with vigor and precision. To his friends he wrote in the preface to his "Saint Thomas":

Thomism claims to make use of reason to distinguish truth from falsehood; it does not want to destroy but to purify modern speculation and to integrate all truth that has been discovered since the time of St. Thomas. It is an essentially synthetic and assimilative philosophy, the only philosophy which, as a matter of fact, attempts throughout the ages and the continents a work of continuity and universality. It is also the only philosophy which, while rising to the knowledge of the supersensible, first requires from experience an unqualified adhesion to sensible reality. The task which lies before it is to disengage from the enormous contribution which the experimental sciences have accumulated in the past four centuries, a genuine philosophy of nature - as, in quite another sphere, to integrate the artistic treasure of modern times in a philosophy of art and beauty which shall be truly universal and at the same time comprehend the efforts being made at the present moment.¹

This was the manner in which Maritain explained his project to those who were seeking information as to his future career. In this passage he outlined the guiding principle of his work to come. He was to interpret modern questions in the light of the principles which had been laid down in the works of St. Thomas.

There were those in the intellectual world who did not miss the opportunity to speak out against this apparent regression. To them, Maritain had something to say:

¹Jacques Maritain, St. Thomas Aquinas, trans. J.F. Scanlan (London: Sheed & Ward, 1948), p. X.

What offends them, (critics of the Thomistic revival,) excites their wrath, gives them scandal, is that anyone should think that he, Thomas Aquinas, still subsists, that he dominates history, that his light, because it is spiritual, and his philosophy, because it is true, still continue with their essential grandeur and essential efficacy, to-day as in the time of St. Louis.

Immersing every reality, even of a spiritual nature, in the flux of time, considering the value of the very substance of wisdom as essentially determined by time and history, they think that to acknowledge any immutability whatsoever, imposing itself unaided upon their minds, is to arrest the progress of time, to immobilize history, to claim to solidify the very flux of succession; they do not perceive that the immutability of what wisdom has once acquired is not in time, but above it, and far from arresting the progress of history, rather accelerates its course and the progress of knowledge. Their philosophy under its dapper appearance is poverty itself, destitute of intellectuality, fundamental materialism. What I assert against it is that truth does not disintegrate, that there are stabilities not of inertia but of spirituality and life, intemporal values; eternal acquisitions; that time is in the eternal like a gold piece in the clutch of the hand; and that mind is above time.¹

Thus Maritain met the objection that time had moved on and that the principles which solved the questions of the thirteenth century were no longer the solutions to the problems of the twentieth. His love for truth, his acceptance of it wherever it was found, was the motive force in his seeking it and finding it in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas.

He was too sensible to consider that the problems of the thirteenth century were the same as those of the present day. He did not consider that the works of St. Thomas contained answers to the questions which were of immediate concern to the people with whom he associated in the world of the present, but he considered that the basic truths were to be found in these writings, and the application of these truths was the business of the philosopher, the modern Thomist.

La renaissance thomiste a donc pour condition une fidélité rigoureuse, non seulement aux principes généraux et très généraux (il y a des personnes qui s'imaginent qu'on est thomiste si on croit que Dieu existe, et qu'il a créé le ciel et la terre), mais aux moindres principes philosophiques de saint Thomas - je ne parle pas des éléments matériels et caducs de la synthèse thomiste, par exemple de tout le matériel scientifique dans lequel les Anciens enrobaient leurs principes métaphysiques, et qui a besoin

¹Ibid., p. XIII.

d'être entièrement revouvé - je parle des principes formels de saint Thomas, dont le plus insignifiant en apparence a sa place nécessaire dans une doctrine qui est organique et vivante, et qui embrasse tous les aspects du réel.

J'ai besoin de dire qu'il ne s'agit pas là non plus d'un attachement servile à saint Thomas et à Aristote, et d'une manière de philosopher qui consisterait à répéter leurs formules d'une façon mécanique. Il s'agit d'une fidélité spirituelle et filiale, qui fait chercher dans leurs principes activement médités, groupés, coordonnés, le moyen de découvrir; d' "inventer" la solution des problèmes nouveaux qui peuvent se poser de nos jours, et cela grâce à un effort original de l'esprit. Car c'est implicitement et virtuellement, ce n'est pas explicitement que ces principes contiennent la réponse à tout nouveau problème philosophique, ou plutôt aux nouvelles déterminations et aux nouveaux modes que les éternels problèmes philosophiques peuvent recevoir de nos jours. Mais précisément à cause de cela le moindre de ces principes a une valeur infinie.¹

There can be no doubt as to the belief of Maritain that Thomistic philosophy contained the doctrines of truth. He considered that if the world was founded on truth, or the reality of being, there must have been a radical change in the thinking of men since the time that these truths were the common heritage of humanity.

Were these truths, once rediscovered, to remain the treasure of the searcher who was fortunate enough to come upon them as he had, after long and diligent labor? Was the world at large to be deprived of the results of his research, and was he to retire to an "ivory tower", there alone to rejoice in the possession of truth?

He answered these questions in his pronouncement of the objectives of the Thomistic revival. He had stated, "vae mihi, si non thomistizavero!" and, for him, Thomism was the basis on which the thinking and direction of human affairs should and must be carried out.

I even think that the time has come for it to spread into every kind of profane speculative activity, to quit the confines of school, seminary or college and to assume throughout the whole world of culture the role appropriate to a wisdom of the natural order: its place is among its sister sciences and it must exchange ideas with politics and ethnology,

¹Jacques Maritain, Antimoderne, p. 133.

history and poetry; bred in the open air, in the free discussions of peripateticism, its desire is, while holding aloof from the active business of mankind, to take an interest in everything that concerns human life; it is essential for it to keep in contact with sensible experience; to maintain its own vitality it needs a great expanse in which to breathe and unceasing exchanges.¹

If, as Maritain claims, the modern system of thought and philosophy is wrong, if it is based on false assumptions, there must have been some place at which these false assumptions were first introduced into modern thinking.

Speaking of the philosophy of Maritain, Doctor Phelan says:

The root-cause of the trouble, he declares, is a suicidal decision of philosophers to disown completely the proper function of the intelligence and to place as the first condition of all knowledge an initial sin against the light.²

This "sin against the light" was the work of Descartes, from whose theories flow the modern errors in regard to the proper function of the intellect.

The dream of Descartes was to free the mind from its dependence upon things, to confer upon human reason an intuitive mode of knowing like that of the pure spirits and to relieve it of the burden of discursive thought by depositing ideas innate within its very essence.

The sin of Descartes was the sin of angelism. He turned Knowledge and Thought into a hopeless perplexity, an abyss of unrest, because he conceived human Thought after the type of angelic Thought. To sum it up in three words: What he saw in man's thought was Independence of Things; that is what he put into it, what he revealed to it about itself.³

In another passage Maritain describes more fully the process by which the human mind reaches the state which he deplores in modern thinking, a consequence of the Cartesian theory.

¹Jacques Maritain, St. Thomas Aquinas, p. 82.

²Gerald B. Phelan, Jacques Maritain, (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937),

p. 17.

³Jacques Maritain, Three Reformers (London: Sheed & Ward, 1950),

p. 54.

The mind imagines that it is giving proof of its own native strength by denying and rejecting as science first theology and then metaphysics; by abandoning any attempt to know the primary cause and immaterial realities; by cultivating a more or less refined doubt which is an outrage both to the perception of the senses and the principles of reason, that is to say, the very things on which all our knowledge depends. Such a presumptuous collapse of human knowledge may be described in one word: agnosticism.

The mind at the same time refuses to recognize the rights of primary truth and repudiates the supernatural order, considering it impossible - and such a denial is a blow at all the interior life of grace, that may be described in a word as naturalism.

The mind allows itself to be deceived by the mirage of a mythical conception of human nature, which attributes to that nature conditions peculiar to pure spirit, assumes that nature to be in each of us as perfect and complete as the angelic nature in the angel and therefore claims for us, as being in justice our due, along the complete domination over nature, the superior autonomy, the full self-sufficiency... appropriate to pure forms.

That may be described as individualism, giving the word its full metaphysical meaning, although angelism would be a more proper description.¹

It might be well at this point to consider what Maritain means in calling the sin of Descartes the sin of angelism. Maritain himself explains it in outlining the teaching of St. Thomas concerning the angelic spirits and their mode of knowing.

According to St. Thomas's teaching, the human intellect is the last of the spirits, and the most remote from the perfection of the divine Intelligence. As the zoophyte bridges the gap between two kingdoms, so the rational animal is a transitional form between the corporeal world and the spiritual world. Above it, crowded like sea sand, rise in countless multitude the pure spirits in their hierarchies. These are thinking substances in the true sense of the word, pure subsistent forms, who certainly receive existence and are not existence, as God is, but they do not inform matter and are free from the vicissitudes of time, movement, generation and corruption, of all the divisions of space, all the weaknesses of individuation by *materia signata*; and each concentrates in himself more metaphysical stuff than the whole human race together. Each by itself is a specific type, and exhausts the perfection of its essence, and therefore they are borne, from the moment of their creation, to the complete fullness of their natural possibilities, incorrupt by definition. They raise over our heads a canopy of immensity, an abundance of stability and strength which, in comparison with us, is infinite. Transparent each to his own glance; each with full preception of his own substance by that substance, and at a single leap naturally knowing God also - by analogy, no doubt, but in what a mirror of splendor: their intellect,

¹Jacques Maritain, St. Thomas Aquinas, p. 93.

always in act with regard to its intelligible objects, does not derive its ideas from things, as does ours, but has them direct from God, Who infuses them into it when He creates it. And by these innate ideas, which are in it as a derivation from the divine Ideas, their intellect knows created things in the creative light itself, rule and measure of all that is. Infallible, then, and even impeccable in the natural order, considered apart from the supernatural end: autonomous and self-sufficing, so far as a creature can be self-sufficing: the life of the angels is an endless outflow of thought, knowledge, and will, without weariness or sleep. Piercing, in the perfect clearness of their intuitions, not, of course, the secrets of hearts nor the unfolding of future contingencies, but all essences and all laws, the whole substance of this universe: knowing the power and actions of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, all other bodies, as distinctly as we know the different occupations of our workmen, they are finally, without hands or machines, as masters and possessors of nature, and can play upon nature as on a guitar by modifying the movement of the atoms at their will. In all this we are speaking of the attributes of the angelic nature considered in itself, and, apart from its elevation to the supernatural order, as it subsists in fallen and faithful spirits alike. That is the model on which a son of Tournaine set out one day to reform the human mind.¹

For Maritain, Descartes had set in motion a chain-reaction with deplorable results. He had denied the Thomistic doctrine that all knowledge comes through the senses, and that the senses, for man, are the contacts with reality, the truth of which is in being.

Thus it is that Maritain can speak of the angelism of Descartes, and it is from this doctrine that Maritain sees many of the great evils of the present day spreading outward from their source as the ripples spread from a stone thrown into still water.

Still other results of this doctrine are closer in the immediate understanding of the average man. Though perhaps less damaging in their fundamental injuries to the human spirit, they are more easily apparent to the investigation of the modern onlooker.

It remains - and this is what concerns us - that the Cartesian ideas come from God, like angelic ideas, not from objects. Thus the human soul is not only subsistent as the ancients taught, causing the body to exist with its own existence; it has, without the body, received direct from God all the operative perfection which can befit it.

¹Jacques Maritain, Three Reformers, p. 55.

There is the destruction of the very reason of its union with the body, or rather, there is its inversion. For if the body and the senses are not necessary means of the acquisition of its ideas for that soul, and consequently the instrument by which it rises to its own perfection, which is the life of the intelligence and the contemplation of truth, then, as the body must be for the soul and not the soul for the body, the body and senses can be there for nothing but to provide the soul - which needs only itself and God in order to think - with means for the practical subjugation of the earth and all material nature, and this reduces the soul's good to the domination of the physical universe.¹

Maritain considers the disregard of the spiritual to be one of the great evils of the present day. This disregard he sees as a result of the Cartesian theory that the soul uses the body only for the domination of the physical universe.

Another result of the theories of Descartes is the complete separation of the mind and the intellect from contact with reality. The mind, which knows only innate ideas, is in contact with nothing but itself, its criterion of truth is within it, not depending on any conformation of the idea with the reality existing outside the mind. This is idealism, placing the whole burden of judging truth and reality on the subjective considerations of the mind, and not, since it is impossible, on the comparison with truth in reality.

With this theory of representational ideas the claims of Cartesian reason to independence of external objects reach their highest point: thought breaks with Being. It forms a sealed world which is no longer in contact with anything but itself; its ideas, now opaque effigies interposed between it and external objects, are still for Descartes a sort of lining of the real world. But as Hamelin says, the lining was to consume the cloth. Here again Kant finishes Descartes' work. If the intelligence when it thinks, reaches immediately only its own thought, or its representations, the thing hidden behind these representations remains for ever unknowable.²

To Maritain this is contrary to the order of reality. Man was created with certain powers by which he was able to reach and know reality. This knowledge was to serve him as a stepping-stone to the ultimate Truth, God, for Whom he was created. It was to this end that the philosophy of St.

¹Ibid. p. 63.

²Ibid. p. 78.

Thomas was directed, examining and explaining the instruments with which man is equipped to reach this end, and outlining the method by which the end was to be attained.

This philosophy, old in the sense that it had been the common belief of the ages before theories such as that of Descartes gained ground, seems to Maritain to have lost nothing because of its age. He says:

The old philosophy knew the nobility of the intelligence and the sublime nature of thought. It knew that in its purity, and freed from every condition alien to its formal notion, it is only fully realized in the infinitely holy God. It knew that if human intelligence is the last of the intelligences, it yet partakes of the life and liberty which belongs to the spirit; that if it depends on the object to which it is proportioned, it is to gush out in spontaneous action and become all things; that if it depends on the being which makes it fruitful, it is to conquer Being itself and rest only in it. You pay dear for rejecting these truths.¹

That Maritain saw the Cartesian theory of knowledge as the cause of many of the ills of the world today is clear from his summing up of the effects of these doctrines. This, to him, was no abstract criticism of the theories of one dead and gone. It was not a speculative consideration of a dead system, but a warning of the errors that had been introduced into the world by Descartes, however unknowingly, and which are of vital interest to the men of good-will in the world of the present.

We must not forget the importance of the stake. We must not forget that Descartes finally reversed the order of human cognition and made *Metaphysica* an introduction to *Mechanics*, *Medicine*, and *Ethics*, from which we shall henceforth gather the invigorating fruits of learning. In the higher order of Cognition, the Cartesian reformation gave the irretrievable stability of the things of the spirit to the moral attitude of turning towards perishable goods. See what the great name of Science has since become. It is today hardly applied to anything but the knowledge of matter, and science, par excellence, is regarded by most modern thinkers as belonging to a museum. In the modern world, reason turns its back on eternal things and is ordered to the creature. It rates the mathematics of phenomena above theology, science above wisdom. From the mountain of its excellence it has despoiled all the kingdoms of the material

¹Ibid., p. 80.

universe and the glory of time, and it goes down to possess them.¹

Maritain had been enraptured from his early youth with the beauty of truth. For him, following the teachings of St. Thomas, creation, the universe, is theocentric. This, to him, is a fact from which man cannot escape by denying it or by ignoring it. He had sought the essence of things as they are, not as man would have them to be, and his search had led him to the edge of suicide. Now that he was perfectly satisfied as to the true order of the universe and the proper end of man, it was important that man should know and accept the reality of this truth.

However, men might have claimed to be uninterested in the metaphysical truths which govern the nature of being and of good, it is apparent from the history of mankind that these truths, or the theories held concerning these truths, had a tremendous effect on the actions of mankind. Their patterns of thought as well as their beliefs were governed and controlled by the current thinking done in this regard. It was imperative, then, that the thought of mankind be corrected and directed toward the truth of these matters. It was necessary that these great truths should be considered, not as speculative knowledge, but as practical knowledge applied to human life.

It is the business of the theologian to consider the nature of God and all that can be known about Him. It is the work of the philosopher to make use of the instruments given to man, the intellect and the reason, to know what we can of God, especially in the field of the relationship of God to man and man to God.

Maritain's chief work is in the field of human relations, both with man's fellowman, and man's relationship with God. He considers that many of the difficulties of the present day stem from the lack of right understanding of the nature of man, and in consequence, man's relations with his fellowman.

¹Ibid. p. 82.

Maritain made a deep study of the nature of man so as to outline clearly the distinction between the person and the individual.

What does Christian philosophy tell us? It tells us that the person is "a complete individual substance, intellectual in nature and master of its own actions", *sui juris*, autonomous, in the authentic sense of the word. And so the word person is reserved for substances which possess that divine thing, the spirit, and are in consequence, each by itself, a world above the whole bodily order, a spiritual and moral world, which, strictly speaking, is not a part of the universe, and whose secret is hidden even from the natural perception of the angels. The word person is reserved for substances which, choosing their end, are capable of themselves deciding on the means, and of introducing series of new events into the universe by their liberty; for substances which can say after their kind, fiat, and it is so. And what makes their dignity, what makes their personality, is just exactly the subsistence of the spiritual and immortal soul and its supreme independence in regard to all fleeting imagery and all the machinery of sensible phenomena. And St. Thomas teaches that the word person signifies the noblest and highest in all nature: "*persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura*".

The word individual, on the contrary, is common to man and beast, to plant, microbe, and atom. And, whilst personality rests on the subsistence of the human soul, (a subsistence independent of the body and communicated to the body which is sustained in being by the very subsistence of the soul), Thomist philosophy tells us that individuality as such is based on the peculiar needs of matter, the principle of individuation because it is the principle of division, because it requires to occupy a position and have quantity, by which that which is here will differ from what is there. So that in so far as we are individuals we are only a fragment of matter, a part of this universe, distinct, no doubt, but a part, a point of that immense network of forces and influences, physical and cosmic, vegetative and animal, ethnic, atavistic, hereditary, economic and historic, to whose laws we are subject. As individuals, we are subject to the stars. As persons, we rule them.¹

This is the fundamental nature of man, the reason for his worth and dignity, the reason why his fellow men, the State, and all other agencies must consider the worth and dignity inherent in him when dealing with him, when legislating for him, and when so controlling the environment that he may be led to his final end, union with God.

There is in him a richer and nobler existence; he has spiritual existence through knowledge and love. He is thus, in some way, a whole, not merely a part; he is a universe unto himself, a microcosm in which the great universe in its entirety can be encompassed through knowledge.

¹Ibid. p. 19.

And through love he can give himself freely to beings who are to him, as it were, other selves; and for this relationship no equivalent can be found in the physical world.

If we seek the prime root of all this, we are led to the acknowledgement of the full philosophical reality of that concept of the soul, so variegated in its connotations, which Aristotle described as the first principle of life in any organism and viewed as endowed with supramaterial intellect in man, and which Christianity revealed as the dwelling place of God and as made for eternal life. In the flesh and bones of man there exists a soul which is a spirit and which has a greater value than the whole physical universe. Dependent though he may be upon the slightest accidents of matter, the human person exists by virtue of the existence of his soul, which dominates time and death. It is the spirit which is the root of personality. The notion of personality thus involves that of wholeness and independence. To say that a man is a person is to say that in the depth of his being he is more a whole than a part and more independent than servile. It is this mystery of our nature which religious thought designates when it says that the person is the image of God. A person possesses absolute dignity because he is in direct relationship with the realm of being, truth, goodness, and beauty, and with God, and it is only with these that he can arrive at his complete fulfillment. His spiritual fatherland consists of the entire order of things which have absolute value, and which reflect, in some manner, a divine Absolute superior to the world and which have a power of attraction toward this Absolute.¹

It is from this fundamental truth of human nature, the special properties of personality, that Man's relationship with his fellowman is born. Speaking of personality, Maritain says "it tends by its very nature to social life and to communion."²

According to Maritain, the human personality has need of others for its material, intellectual and moral life. This fundamental need of the human person is the basis and reason for society.

This is true not only because of the needs and the indigence of human nature, by reason of which each one of us has need of others for his material, intellectual and moral life, but also because of the radical generosity inscribed within the very being of the person, because of that openness

¹Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 8.

²Jacques Maritain, The Rights of Man and Natural Law, trans. Doris C. Anson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 5.

to the communication of intelligence and love which is the nature of the spirit, and which demands an entrance into relationship with other persons. To state it rigorously, the person cannot be alone.¹

But society, to Maritain, is more than a collection of the human persons who form it, and it has a good which is distinct from that of the individual persons who make it up.

Society is a whole whose parts are themselves wholes, and it is an organism composed of liberties, not just vegetative cells. It has its own good and its own work which are distinct from the good and the work of the individuals which constitute it. But this good and this work are and must be essentially human, and consequently become perverted if they do not contribute to the development of human persons.²

The common good of society is something distinct from the individual good of the persons who make it up; nor is it to be sought at the expense of the good of the persons who are the constituents of society.

It is the good human life of the multitude, of a multitude of persons, the good life of totalities at once carnal and spiritual, and principally spiritual, although they more often happen to live by the flesh than by the spirit. The common good of society is their communion in the good life; it is therefore common to the whole and to the parts, which are in themselves wholes, since the very notion of person means totality; it is common to the whole and to the parts, over which it flows back and which must all benefit from it. Under pain of being itself denatured, it implies and demands the recognition of the fundamental rights of the person (and the rights of the family, in which persons are enmeshed in a more primitive way of communal living than in political society.) It involves, as its chief value, the highest possible attainment (that is, the highest compatible with the good of the whole) of persons to their lives as persons, and to their freedom of expansion of autongmy - and to the gifts of goodness which in their turn flow from it.³

The object of society is to lead its members to the development of the highest potentialities of each individual member. This demands that certain individuals in the society should be intrusted with the duty of see-

¹Ibid. p. 5.

²Ibid. p. 7.

³Ibid. p. 8.

ing that this end is reached. This obligation demands the exercise of authority. It is the common good which is the basis for this authority. The decisions which they make must be guided by this end, the common good, and the obedience which is shown to their laws must be rendered by the other members of the society as a means of attaining the common good. This obedience is not that of slaves, rather that of free men. Maritain says of this:

Such an authority, aimed at the good of the whole, applies to free men, in utter contrast to the dominion wielded by a master over human beings for the particular good of this master himself.¹

Since society is a whole made up of persons, and since the good of society is the good of the persons making it up, the spiritual destiny of the persons requires that the good of society be orientated to a spiritual good. Thus the common good must have to do with intrinsic morality. This implies, not merely a set of advantages and conveniences, but essentially integrity of life, justice and moral righteousness being essential to the common good.

Maritain sums up his ideas of the ideal society by saying that it must be theist or Christian. Not that he would require every member of the society to be a Christian or to believe in God, but that society in general recognize that God, Who is the principle and end of the human person, is the prime source of society and authority among men. This recognition involves the acknowledgement that the liberty and fraternity released by the Gospel, the virtues of justice and friendship, the practical respect for the human person, and the responsibility of those who exercise authority and of those who obey it make up the internal energy which civilization needs for its fulfillment.

¹Ibid. p. 10.

Those who do not accept the teachings of the Christian gospel, or even believe in the existence of God, can accept the practical application of the Christian virtues in society. In this way they share in the direction of society to the common good. In this conception, civil society is linked with religion. Maritain writes of this idea:

In this conception civil society is organically linked to religion and turns consciously towards the source of this being by invoking divine assistance and the divine name as its members know it. Independent in its own temporal sphere, it has above it the kingdom of things that are not Caesar's and must cooperate with religion, not by any kind of theocracy or clericalism, nor by exercising any sort of pressure in religious matters, but by respecting and facilitating, on the basis of the rights and liberties of each of us, the spiritual activity of the Church and of the diverse religious families which are grouped within the temporal community.¹

Maritain, after outlining the nature of the society which he feels is the proper one to carry out the destiny of mankind, proceeds to the question of the working of this society. What, he asks, are the historical records of the various societies as to the fulfilling of their task?

What is the work for whose achievement men gather together to set up a political society? This work does not relate merely to some particular department of human activity, as is the case, for instance, with the work undertaken by a society of biologists, namely, the progress of the biological sciences. No, the political task relates to the human life itself of the social whole; and each individual, as we have seen, is in his entirety enmeshed in this common work, although he is not enmeshed by reason of himself as a whole and by reason of all that is in him, and although he transcends it from other points of view. It would be distorting the nature of political society to assign to it as object a task of a grade inferior to human life itself and to the activities of internal improvement which are proper to it. I noted a moment ago that in the bourgeois-individualist conception, there is, properly speaking, no common task; the function of the State is only to insure the material convenience of scattered individuals, each absorbed in his own well-being and in enriching himself. In the communist-totalitarian conception, the essential and primordial task of the social whole, or rather the trend in which "communion" inevitably asserts itself, is the political domination of other men. In these three conceptions - of which the third is certainly the worst - political society

¹Ibid. p. 22.

is distorted and the human person sacrificed. In the bourgeois-individualist conception, which confused the true dignity of an abstract individual, supposedly sufficient unto himself, the human person was left alone and unarmed; particularly were the persons of those without possessions left alone and unarmed before the possessors who exploited them. In the communist conception and in the racist conception the dignity of the person is disregarded, and the human person is sacrificed to the titanism of industry, which is the god of the economic community, or to the demon of race and blood, which is the god of the racial community. And for none of these does there exist a properly political task.¹

For Maritain, then, there is a political society which will be built on fixed principles, and will contain the following essential structure:

The common good flowing back over individuals; political authority leading free men towards this common good; intrinsic morality of the common good and of political life. Personalist, communal, and pluralist inspiration of the social organization; organic link between civil society and religion, without religious compulsion of clericalism, in other words, a truly, decoratively, Christian society. Law and justice, civic friendship and the equality it implies, as essential principles of the structure, life and pace of society. A common task inspired by the ideal of liberty and fraternity, tending, as its ultimate goal, towards the establishment of a brotherly city wherein the human being will be freed from servitude and misery.²

Maritain would not have us think that by simply admitting the principles on which the society should be founded, all the problems which confront men in the modern world would immediately disappear. He is too close to reality to consider that he has outlined a system in which none of the strife and struggle of human life would exist. He sees clearly the tension in daily life of the modern man and sees a philosophical basis for its existence.

I should like to point out once again that if a sound political conception depends above all on concentrating on the human person, it must at the same time bear in mind the fact that this person is an animal gifted with reason, and that the part of animality in such a set-up is immense. The roll of the instincts, of the feelings, of the irrational is even greater in social and political than in individual life. It follows, therefore, that a work of education, taming the irrational to reason, and developing the moral virtues, must constantly

¹Ibid. p. 41.

²Ibid. p. 54.

be pursued within the political body; it follows that this latter must be in a state of tension and defense against perpetual internal and external threats of disintegration and destruction; it follows that authority, aside from its essential function which is to lead free men towards the common good, must exercise subsidiary functions, not only of penal sanction for those who violate the laws of the commonwealth, but also of moral direction and training for those who still behave like minors; and it follows that many evils, as well as more or less impure collective feelings and group instincts, must be tolerated - which you cannot attempt to abolish by external pressure and by law without provoking even greater evils.¹

That this animality in man cannot be taken as the rule of his life, and that the personality of man, the spiritual and material union which makes up man, has its allegiance first to the spiritual, comes from the very nature of man and is the basis of his rights as a person.

I am taking it for granted that you admit that there is a human nature, and that this human nature is the same for all men. I am taking it for granted that you also admit that man is a being gifted with intelligence, and who, as such, acts with an understanding of what he is doing, and therefore, with the power to determine for himself the ends which he pursues. On the other hand, possessed of a nature, being constituted in a given, determinate fashion, man obviously possesses ends which correspond to his natural constitution and which are the same for all.... But since man is endowed with intelligence and determines his own ends, it is up to him to put himself in tune with the ends necessarily demanded by his nature. This means that there is, by very virtue of human nature, an order or a disposition which human reason can discover and according to which the human will must act in order to attune itself to the necessary ends of the human being. The unwritten law, or natural law is nothing more than that.²

The existence of the natural law and the moral conscience within us, which is the knowledge of this law, do not merely prescribe things to be done and not to be done, they also recognize rights, rights which are linked with the very nature of man.

The human person possesses rights because of the very fact that it is a person, a whole, master of itself and of its acts, and which consequently is not merely a means to an end, but an end, an end which must be treated as such. The dignity of the person? The expression means nothing if it

¹Ibid. p. 55.

²Ibid. p. 60.

does not signify that by virtue of natural law, the human person has the right to be respected, is the subject of rights, possesses rights. There are things which are owed to man because of the very fact that he is a man. The notion of right and the notion of moral obligation are correlative. They are both founded on the freedom proper to spiritual agents. If man is morally bound to the things which are necessary to the fulfillment of his destiny, obviously, then, he has the right to the things necessary for this purpose.¹

For Maritain, the basic rights of the human person are such as to be beyond the power of the State, and must be respected by the civil authority.

The fact that the human person naturally transcends the State, to the extent that the former enfold a destiny superior to time, may be verified in many other ways.

The universe of truths - of science, of wisdom, and of poetry - towards which the intelligence tends by itself, belongs, by nature, to a plane higher than the political community. The power of the State and of social interests cannot impose itself upon this universe.²

It is clear that, for Maritain, the human person is the centre of interest in the state and in the world of everyday life. To violate these rights is a crime against the nature of things, whether it be done in the name of the State or on any other pretext.

To sum up, the fundamental rights, like the right to existence and life; the right to personal freedom or to conduct one's own life as master of oneself and of one's acts, responsible for them before God and the law of the community; the right to the pursuit of the perfection of moral and rational human life; the right to the pursuit of eternal good (without this pursuit there is no true pursuit of happiness); the right to keep one's body whole; the right of private ownership of material goods, which is a safeguard of the liberties of the individual; the right to marry according to one's choice and to raise a family which will be assured of the liberties due it; the right of association, the respect for human dignity in each individual, whether or not he represents an economic value for society - all these rights are rooted in the vocation of the person (a spiritual and free agent) to the order of absolute values and to a destiny superior to time.³

It is from these rights of the person that the freedom of the person is derived. These rights are the basis for the declaration of President Roosevelt,

¹Ibid. p. 65.

²Ibid. p. 76.

³Ibid. p. 79.

commonly known as the Four Freedoms. Maritain quotes these freedoms in a footnote.

- (1) Freedom of speech and expression everywhere in the world.
- (2) Freedom of every person to worship God in his own way everywhere in the world.
- (3) Freedom from want which, translated into world terms, means economic understanding which will secure to every nation a healthy peace-time life for its inhabitants everywhere in the world.
- (4) Freedom from fear which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor anywhere.¹

It is proper that Maritain should have dealt with the question of freedom and its nature, since he has dealt at length with the basis of freedom, the nature of the person. Since, to him, the person is a being endowed with intellect and will, it is necessary to understand the meaning of the term "will". The freedom of man is understood to lie in the exercise of his will.

All the varied senses of the word Freedom which have importance for mankind presuppose this primordial freedom, this fact that our Will in its inner fortress is free not only from all external constraint but also from any kind of inherent necessity that would determine it ad unum.²

It is the teaching of St. Thomas, whom Maritain follows, that freedom of choice is something proper to a certain nature, a rational or intellectual nature. To be free is a quality proper to every intellectual being. Maritain describes the manner in which this freedom is of necessity a characteristic of an intellectual being.

Every appetite (or, in modern terminology, every faculty that manifests tendency or inclination) is a power by which the subject directs himself towards Being in concrete shape in order either to incorporate it in his own self or to incorporate himself in it. It is this attractive or directive function of Being in relation to appetite that gives rise to

¹Ibid. p. 72.

²Jacques Maritain, Freedom in the Modern World, trans. R. O'Sullivan (London: Sheed & Ward, 1935), p. 5.

the notion of ontological Good or Good-in-general and that likewise explains why every appetite is dependent upon knowledge.... It is by our will that we direct ourselves towards things that are good as known to us by our intellect, towards things, that is to say, that are known to us in their character as good. The intellect which abstracts and recognizes the objective form of Being abstracts and recognizes also the objective form of Goodness - a thing which is beyond the power of purely sensitive faculties. In every creature endowed with intellect there ought therefore to be found a power of loving and desiring essentially distinct from the sensitive appetite and tending to the Good as such, to the Good in the universal and transcendental character in which it comprehends each several good. This power we call the rational appetite or will.¹

The will of man is founded in the very nature of man. Since it seeks something it desires by virtue of what it itself is, it is a sort of nature in itself. The will tends of necessity to something of which all it knows is that it satisfies all desires.

What then? If the will is necessarily directed to a good that has no limit, it follows that any good which is not a good without limit cannot bind the will by its necessity. It is because the will has by nature a capacity for the infinite and because it tends by nature and necessarily to an infinite Good which shall fulfil its aspirations that the will is free in face of every particular and partial good, of every good that we can take and measure and that is insufficient to exhaust the infinite capacity of the will to love. If then we decide to will such and such a good, we have none the less the power not to will it. In other words, our will has power to endow the thing it wills with the attraction that thing exercises.²

The freedom of the will depends on its indifference to finite things, on things that are less than the infinite good and infinite Being which is the end of the will. The intellect is aware that the sum of goods is not the Good, since it has a concept of the Good. It is this knowing of the Good which marks the control of the intellect over the choice of the will, and it is necessary to understand the nature of the intellect and its action upon the will.

St. Thomas does not conceive Free Will as a sort of divinity of the noumenal order that lives within us and that nothing can effect. He knows that our free will is immersed in a world of affectivity, of instinct, of passion, of sensitive and spiritual desire. Our will is solicited on every side; it is weak; it loves and desires all sorts of

¹Ibid. p. 6.

²Ibid. p. 7.

"goods" in its own despite. But when our intellect intervenes to deliberate our action it awakens the infinite capacity for love of which we have been speaking; to will and to love this or that good to the point at which it determines my act, the act of my human personality, this is proper to the free action of my will, for it depends on a practical judgment of my intellect which my will alone is able to control. My intellect may indeed adjudge in a speculative way that such an action should be done; but that does not make me do it. This needs a practical decision, a practical judgment of the intellect. And when the mind deliberates it sees that every limited good in so far as it is limited is in one view good, and in another not good; that it is at once acceptable and yet not acceptable; to me who aspire by nature to the Infinite Good. Out of the depths of the will itself must come the efficacy that the particular "good" which solicits it needs in order that it may be adjudged unconditionally good for me.¹

To Maritain, following St. Thomas, the act of free will becomes a result of the united action of the intellect and will, an interaction which is necessary in bringing about the free choice of good which is less than the infinite Good itself, which is the efficacious object of the will. Thus, freedom of the will is the inalienable property of every intellectual or spiritual nature and the possession of free will presupposes such a nature, the nature of intellect and of will. Freedom of the will is the right of a person.

Thus we see that, to Maritain, the right of freedom, a fundamental right of democratic living, is founded on the very nature of man, and proper to him because he is a person endowed with intellect and will.

It is on this foundation that Maritain builds his philosophy concerning the things which interest the modern man. It is on this basis, the personality of man, that he demands the democratic freedoms which must permeate the world.

While we have given a short résumé of some of the fundamental doctrines of his teachings, it would be wrong to consider that we have considered his writings in detail, either as to depth of thought or scope of interest. Etienne Gilson has written of him:

¹Ibid. p. 8.

Nul métaphysicien n'aura jamais trouvé, dans la familiarité de l'éternel, le secret d'une familiarité plus parfaite dans son commerce intime avec les soucis quotidiens de son temps. Pas une question posée où que ce soit dans le monde, pourvu seulement qu'elle trahisse l'inquiétude sincère de la vérité, que Jacques Maritain ne l'entende et ne lui donne réponse. Pas un appel de ceux qui ont faim et soif de justice auquel sa voix ne se soit jointe, que ce fût celle de César ou celle de Christ. Littérature, art, science, éthique, politique nationale ou internationale, on ne voit aucun domaine de la vie et de la pensée de son temps qu'il ait personnellement habité, exploré et reconnu jusqu'à l'extrême limite de ses frontières, lieux naturels d'une pensée attentive à "distinguer pour unir". Parmi tant de philosophes "modernes" extrême pointe d'avant-garde d'une armée de hardis penseurs tout occupés à répéter ce qu'ils ont lu dans des livres vraiment "modernes", notre "anti-moderne" ne permet pas qu'il se fasse rien de grand et d'authentique, qu'aucun problème vital pour l'homme ne se pose, qu'aucun drame humain ne se noue en aucun point de la planète, sans que la Sagesse ne s'y porte avec lui pour rendre témoignage à la vérité.¹

Maritain has written on many subjects, subjects which are of great interest and worth to the modern age. He has laid down principles which, if followed, he feels sure will result in a better and happier world. He claims to be a philosopher, one of those whose duty it is to map the course which is to be followed by the men of action.

It is of particular interest to us that he has written a treatise on the question of education. The principles which have been stressed in the outline noted here of his philosophy, especially that of the person and the dignity of man, are applied by Maritain to the question of Education. It is to be noted that many of the ideals and ideas of the so-called moderns in education have the full agreement and approval of Maritain. Not only does he approve of much in modern education, he, as is his wont in all matters of which he treats, finds solid philosophical principles on which to rest his agreement.

It would be untrue to say that Maritain agrees completely with all the systems of modern educational philosophy. It is true to say that when he dis-

¹Bibliothèque de la Revue Thomiste, Jacques Maritain. Son oeuvre philosophique (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, éditeurs, 1949), p. 3.

agrees, he states the principles on which he disagrees, showing that these systems do not fulfil his requirements for solid basic principles on which to build the future of our schools and the well-being of our state through education.

Maritain does not claim to have established a new philosophical system. He accepts the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas as the true explanation of the nature of reality and of the powers of man to contact and know that reality.

As he himself writes, he has failed to find in the philosophy of Bergson the complete answer to the questions which bothered him concerning the nature of reality and man's ability to know it. Bergson had no intention, as Maritain admits, of forcing his metaphysics on his students as the ultimate truth. He wanted simply to convince them of the need of metaphysics to counteract the materialism of his day.

Maritain accepted the system of St. Thomas completely, in spite of the criticisms of Thomistic philosophy which had begun even during the life-time of its founder. This would argue for Maritain's complete intellectual conviction of the truth of the system. The criticisms of the system were well known to Maritain, but failed to convince him of their validity. He was forced, however, to take notice and to attempt to explain the abandonment of the system in the ages after its foundation.

The changing interests of mankind during the Renaissance, the attacks made on the findings of St. Thomas in the light of the interest in the physical sciences and the growth of the experimental method of gaining knowledge, all had their place in causing a change of interest on the part of men.

It was the culmination of all these trends that Maritain found expressed in the work of Descartes. The "angelism" of Descartes deprived the human

intellect of its proper role in the attaining of truth, and the effects of this doctrine, coupled with the preoccupation in material sciences, resulted in the skepticism so prevalent in Maritain's time.

To reestablish the Thomistic principles of the nature of man, Maritain studied the ideas of individual and person as outlined in St. Thomas. These ideas became basic in his treatment of modern problems of politics and government. The examples of the governments in Europe in the early part of the present century, and the theories on which they were founded, seemed to him to illustrate the doctrine which he was attempting to teach, namely, that denial of the true nature of man led to excesses and crimes against the natural rights of man.

The acceptance of the Thomistic doctrine of the proper end of man, and the obligation of man to seek and attain that end, seemed to be the answer to the materialistic atheism which was gaining control of much of the world's population, and this he taught in all his writings.

The application of Thomistic principles to the questions of the fields of authority of Church and State; the scholastic theory of art; the principles governing the brotherhood of man and racial tolerance; all these questions were dealt with from a Thomistic point of view, and the solutions of the problems outlined.

The principle of the rights and dignity of the person were shown to be the basis for democracy and the freedoms which are considered to be an integral part of that system of government. The obligations placed on those who accept these principles in the realm of education, and an explanation of the nature and principles of education made up a notable part of his writings.

CHAPTER III

MARITAIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

AIMS OF EDUCATION

Philosophy deals with certain problems which are vital to the life of man. It is not a vague groping after solutions, but rather an ordered and systematic search for truth.

Actually, philosophy is a rigorous, disciplined, guarded analysis of some of the most difficult problems which man has ever faced, not just anyone's point of view. It requires the best thought of which man is capable. Philosophers are men of great intelligence and remarkable insight who have been able to see the significance of the discrete events in human experience and, to use Plato's term, take a synoptic view of them.¹

Since the beginning of philosophy, such questions as the purpose of the existence of life, the difference between right and wrong, the possibility of an intelligent purpose of life, what happens after life is over, can any answer be found to these questions and the possibility of having valid knowledge all have been the object of the philosophers' inquiry.

It is clear that the answers to these questions have not always been the same. It is clear, too, that, stemming from the answers given to these questions the courses of action and the direction to goals will be widely divergent. In the matter of education, the purposes for which it is given, and the results which are hoped for from it, will be intimately linked with the answers to the questions which are considered by philosophers.

¹Stella Van Petten Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 4.

Philosophers differ in their answers to these questions.... So eminent a philosopher as John Dewey thinks that it is foolish to attempt to discover answers to most of these questions and that philosophers should turn their attention to solving social problems.¹

But all philosophers have attempted and continue to attempt to answer these and similar questions.

But all philosophers who have exercised a lasting influence upon contemporaneous and subsequent philosophic thought have invariably striven to work out a reasoned, self-critical, ultimate certainty as to the primary cause and the ultimate end of all existence.²

Since the questions of the ends of education and the means by which these ends can be reached are vital to the life of man, it would seem proper to philosophy to examine education as to its basic tenets and its aims and purposes. The philosopher is interested in education, and builds his theories of education on the basis of the principles which he believes to be the basis for the existence of man.

Philosophy, then, can be considered as a critical search for the rules of general conduct of life. These rules are determined in the light of the evaluation of values in which men are guided by a critically built general outlook upon life and its ends - a kind of clearing house for the evaluation of values.³

It is apparent, then, that the values which are placed on the various purposes of life and the end of life itself would be of great importance in forming educational thought as to the nature of direction which should be given to the youth of the day. It would seem, too, that as the ends vary in the thoughtful consideration of the philosophers of education, the aims and purposes of education would also vary. It is from this variation in the evaluation of the ends and purposes of life that spring the many philosophies of education, and the many schools of thought concerning the aims and end.

¹Ibid. p. 4.

²Michael Demiashkevich, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: American Book Company, 1935), p. 35.

³Ibid. p. 27.

While it is possible to distinguish so many varied schools of educational thought, it is also clear that the defenders of each school find no room for the ideas of those who oppose them and that to each his own system seems, and must seem, the one and only solution to the problem.

In order that a man may be a reformer, a leader of men, he must know, or at least be convinced that he knows, the way to a better state of things toward which he wants to lead others. He must not only believe passionately that his goal and his way to it are right, but he must be able also to spread a contagious belief that his is the only right and good goal and way.¹

Maritain, showing this certainty which is common to all philosophers, speaks with authority on the matter of education. He is one to whom the end and the purpose of life is clear. He accepts the Thomistic teaching without any hesitation, and on the foundation that man is created for the eternal end, known to man, he builds his theory of education.

Education is an art, and an especially difficult one. Yet it belongs by its nature to the sphere of ethics and practical wisdom. Education is an ethical art (or rather a practical wisdom in which a determinate art is embodied). Now every art is a dynamic trend toward an object to be achieved, which is the aim of this art. There is no art without ends, art's very vitality is the energy with which it tends toward its end, without stopping at any intermediary step.²

To Maritain, following the teaching of St. Thomas, the end of the art of education is fixed. It exists outside man, and is proper to man by his very nature. The end of man is the Absolute, and to this Absolute all his activities must tend.

It is on this question of the end of education and the end of man that Maritain differs from many of the modern philosophers of education. The trend of modern thought in this matter can be seen from the writings of John Dewey:

¹Ibid. p. 35.

²Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 2.

Theories about the proper end of our activities - educational and moral theories - often violate this principle. They assume ends lying outside our activities; ends foreign to the concrete makeup of the situation; ends which issue from some outside source. Then the problem is to bring our activities to bear upon the realization of these externally supplied ends. They are something for which we ought to act. In any case, such "aims" limit intelligence; they are not the expression of mind in foresight, observation, and choice of the better among alternative possibilities. They limit intelligence because, given readymade, they must be imposed by some authority external to intelligence, leaving to the latter nothing but a mechanical choice of means.¹

Dewey says that the aim set up must be an outgrowth of existing conditions; that the end cannot be something external to the experience to which the individual is exposed. The criteria of ends and aims is the intelligent activity of the individual. This is a denial of the existence of absolute goals or aims apart from the individual himself.

The aim as it first emerges is a mere tentative sketch. The act of striving to realize it tests its worth. If it suffices to direct activity successfully, nothing more is required, since its whole function is to set a mark in advance; and at times a mere hint may suffice. But usually - at least in complicated situations - acting upon it brings to light conditions which had been overlooked. This calls for revision of the original aim; it has to be added to and subtracted from. An aim must, then, be flexible; it must be capable of alteration to meet circumstances. An end established externally to the process of action is always rigid. Being inserted or imposed from without, it is not supposed to have a working relationship to the concrete conditions of the situation. What happens in the course of action neither confirms, refutes, nor alters it. Such an end can only be insisted upon.... The value of a legitimate aim, on the contrary, lies in the fact that we can use it to change conditions. It is a method for dealing with conditions so as to effect desirable alterations in them.²

It would seem that those who are of the same mind as Dewey in the matter of values and ends or aims would consider that the value of an aim comes from the attitude of the one who sets up the aim rather than from the intrinsic value.

After reviewing the past philosophic schools which held that there is

¹John Dewey, Democracy and Education. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 121.

²Ibid. p. 122.

an external reality which gives value to the sensible reality around us, Lewis says:

But what is common to them all is something we cannot neglect. It is the doctrine of objective value, the belief that certain attitudes are really true, and others really false, to the kind of thing the universe is and the kind of things we are.¹

Another author who is considered to speak with authority from the scientific point of view, Lecomte du Nouy, says:

Human evolution, therefore, still depends on the fruits of intelligence but no longer on its development which seems to be attained, long ago, such a high level, in certain individuals, that it cannot be said to have increased since that time. It depends above all on the progress of morality, that is to say, on its extension to the great majority of men, for the fundamental moral ideas are absolute and cannot be perfected.²

Catholic philosophers of education hold as essential the acceptance of basic fundamental principles, absolute in value, and in truth, on which the nature of man and his destiny are based and which are to be the guiding light of his development during his lifetime.

The Catholic viewpoint is that educational policies and programs should be guided by sound philosophy, so that pupils will be trained to respond intelligently to social changes and social needs. In other words, there should be a consistent but flexible educational program: consistent in that it adheres strictly to unchanging fundamental principles by which alone the true nature of man, society, and democracy can be known and rightly interpreted; and flexible in that it makes provision for adjustment to accidental and environmental social changes.³

It is to this school, that which accepts the existence of positive, absolute values independent of sensible phenomena, that Maritain belongs. To him, the basis of any educational philosophy must be the acceptance of these values as really existing, and the recognition of the fact that man has been created within a framework of these values, with a definite destiny to be worked out in his life, in relation to these absolutes.

¹C.S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 12.

²Lecomte de Nouy, Human Destiny (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947), p. 141.

³John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1942), p. 579.

To say that man is a person is to say that in the depth of his being he is more a whole than a part and more independent than servile. It is this mystery of our nature which religious thought designates when it says that the person is the image of God. A person possesses absolute dignity because he is in direct relationship with the realm of being, truth, goodness, and beauty, and with God, and it is only with these that he can arrive at his complete fulfillment. His spiritual fatherland consists of the entire order of things which have absolute value, and which reflect, in some manner, a Divine Absolute superior to this world and which have a power of attraction toward this Absolute.¹

For Maritain, then, the education of man must take into consideration the purpose of man's existence on earth. It is not enough to train man for this earthly life since this is not the only obligation placed on man. He has duties and obligations toward the absolute which exists outside of him, and his energy must be directed toward the fulfilling of the end ordained for him by his Creator.

Thus the fact remains that the complete and integral idea of man which is prerequisite of education can only be a philosophical and religious idea of man. I say philosophical, because this idea pertains to the nature or essence of man; I say religious, because of the existential status of this human nature in relation to God and the special gifts and trials and vocation involved.²

Maritain considers that the most important element in education is that which has reference to the spiritual values, the absolutes which are the ultimate goal of human life. To him, this is the end and purpose of education.

We may now define in a more precise manner the aim of education. It is to guide man in the evolving dynamism through which he shapes himself as a human person - armed with knowledge, strength of judgment, and moral virtues - while at the same time conveying to him the spiritual heritage of the nation and the civilization in which he is involved, and preserving in this way the century-old achievements of generations. The utilitarian aspect of education - which enables the youth to get a job and make a living - must surely not be disregarded, for the children of man are not made for aristocratic leisure. But this practical aim is best provided by the general

¹Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 8.

²Ibid. p. 6.

human capacities developed. And the ulterior specialized training which may be required must never imperil the essential aim of education.¹

Maritain teaches that, since the more important, though not the exclusive part of man, is the personality as distinguished from the individual, it is in the development of this higher part of man that education should be primarily concerned. It is in the development of these potentialities that man gains the highest development of his essential being.

The chief aspirations of a person are aspirations to freedom - I do not mean that freedom which is free will and which is a gift of nature in each of us, I mean that freedom which is spontaneity, expansion, or autonomy, and which we have to gain through constant effort and struggle. And what is the more profound and essential form of such a desire? It is the desire for inner and spiritual freedom. In this sense Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle, spoke of the independence which is granted to men by intellect and wisdom as the perfection of the human being. And the Gospel was to lift up human perfection to a higher level - a truly divine one - by stating that it consists of the perfection of love, and, as St. Paul put it, of the freedom of those who are moved by the divine Spirit. In any case, it is by the activities that the philosophers call "immanent" - because they perfect the very subject which exerts them, and are within it the supreme activities of internal achievement and superabundance - that the full freedom of independence is won. Thus the prime goal of education is the conquest of internal and spiritual freedom to be achieved by the individual person, or, in other words, his liberation through knowledge and wisdom, good will, and love.²

Maritain would stress the fact that the freedom of which he speaks is not a mere freeing of potentialities without any object to be grasped. Since man, to Maritain, is composed of material and spiritual entities, the struggle to attain, and the very attaining of the spiritual end of man, is the crowning glory of his existence. In this he differs from the views of Dewey:

But we must remember that the object is only a mark or sign by which the mind specifies the activity one desires to carry out. Strictly speaking, not the target but hitting the target is the end in view; one takes aim by means of the target, but also by the sight of the gun. The different objects which are thought of are means of directing the activity....

¹Ibid. p. 10.

²Ibid. p. 11.

The doing with the thing, not the thing in isolation, is his end. The object is but a phase of the active end - continuing the activity successfully.¹

In this thought of Dewey, the importance is laid on the activity, with the end as an incentive to the action. In the thought of Maritain, on the contrary, the end is all-important.

At this point we must observe that the freedom of which we are speaking is not a mere unfolding of potentialities without any object to be grasped, or a mere movement for the sake of movement, without aim or objective to be attained. It is sheer nonsense to offer such a movement to man as constituting his crowning glory. A movement without aim is just running around in circles and getting nowhere. The aim, here on earth, will always be grasped in a partial and imperfect manner, and in this sense, indeed, the movement is to be pursued without end. Yet the aim will somehow be grasped, even though partially. Moreover the spiritual activities of the human being are intentional activities, they tend by nature toward an object, an objective aim, which will measure and rule them, not materially and by means of bondage, but spiritually and by means of liberty, for the object of knowledge or of love is internalized by the activity itself of the intelligence and the will, and becomes within them the very fire of their perfect spontaneity.²

St. Thomas Aquinas states as a principle that the operation of a being follows its nature: "Modus operandi uniuscujusque rei sequatur modum ipsius."³

Maritain, with St. Thomas, holds that the essence of man is the soul. Since it is the nature of man to be spiritual, to have a soul, then, in the light of the above principle, it is the nature of man to act according to his nature, the spiritual entity which makes him a man.

Maritain, with St. Thomas, holds also that the highest power of man is his intellect, a power of the soul by which man can know truth. St. Thomas says: "Respondeo dicendum quod sicut bonum nominat id in quod tendit appetitus, ita verum nominat id in quod tendit intellectus."⁴

¹John Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 123.

²Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 11.

³St. Thomae Aquinatis, Summa Theologica, pars prima, (Taurini: Libreria Marietti, MCMXXXVII), p. 583.

⁴Ibid. p. 119.

Not only does St. Thomas hold that the intellect has as its object truth, but also that the intellect is the highest of all the powers of man.

"Inter alias autem potentias intellectus altior est, et voluntati propinquior."¹

Maritain, considering the above principles, states that it is the attainment of truth which will actualize the greatest potentialities of man. It is in this attainment of truth that man will find freedom which is his heritage. It is in this search for and acquisition of truth that the true education lies.

Truth - which does not depend on us but on what is - truth is not a set of ready-made formulas to be passively recorded, so as to have the mind closed and enclosed by them. Truth is an infinite realm - as infinite as being - whose wholeness transcends infinitely our powers of perception, and each fragment of which must be grasped through vital and purified internal activity. This conquest of being, this progressive attainment of new truths, or the progressive realization of the ever-renewed significance of truths already attained, opens and enlarges our mind and life, and really situates them in freedom and autonomy. And speaking of will and love rather than knowledge, no one is freer, or more independent, than the one who gives himself for a cause or a real being worthy of the gift.²

Though Maritain states the view which is held by many in this regard, it would not be true to say that such a view is without its critics.

It demands a belief in a Supreme Creator, an Absolute Truth, and a power in man by which he can attain to this truth. Such is not the belief of many who are considered as spokesmen of modern thought.

We moderns are rightly hostile to a supposed Platonism which represents reason and understanding and thought as otherworldly influences, descending, as it were, from heaven upon the human scene, bringing to bear upon men's lives a control essentially alien and superior to human nature itself. We know now that whatever reason may be, it is human. It is made by man. It arises out of customary human activity.³

Those things which Maritain held as absolutely true; those principles

¹Ibid. pars Secunda Secundae p. 465.

²Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 12.

³Alexander Micklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), p. 111.

on which he based his whole theory of education; the existence of God, the dependence of man upon that Supreme Creator, and the nature of man, created in the image and likeness of that God; these things, so fundamental for Maritain, so necessary in the shaping of the world as he sees it; these things are not accepted as absolutely true by the modern writers on philosophy and education.

For men who believed in God, the universe was an expression of thoughts and purposes because of which the world had been made, for the sake of which it was carried on. But the Darwinian nontheological theory gives to intelligence no such cosmic status. Thinking is, so far as we know, man-made. No other thing, living or nonliving, shares in the conscious attempt to know, to appreciate, to control. The cosmos as a whole, out of which human life emerges, gives no evidence of being, or wishing to be, intelligent. The human spirit is alone in an otherwise nonhuman, nonspiritual universe. Whatever it has, or may ever have, of sensitiveness, of wisdom, of generosity, of freedom, of justice, it has made, it will make, for itself.¹

It is apparent, then, that the school of thought represented by Maritain is divided from the so-called "modern school" on fundamental questions such as the existence of God, and the spirituality and even the existence of the soul of man. Sidney Hook, in criticising Hutchins on his theory of education, says:

Monsignor Sheen and M. Maritain are more frank with us than their epigoni at Chicago and elsewhere. But all of them owe us a proof that the immortal soul, as defined by them, exists. So far not a shred of valid experimental evidence has been adduced to warrant belief in its existence. In fact, the achievements of genuine knowledge about human nature in biology, psychology, and history have been largely won by a bitter struggle against obstacles set in the path of scientific inquiry by believers in a supernatural soul.²

To Maritain, the existence of God and of the human soul is true. There can be no doubt about these facts. He takes them as the basic facts of reality,

¹Ibid. p. 199.

²Sidney Hook, Education for Modern Man (New York: The Dial Press, 1946), p. 21.

and it is on these facts that his understanding of reality and the nature of man rests. The modern philosopher of education does not accept these as facts. He sees the belief in God in the traditional sense as the recognition of the qualities of humanity in general by man in particular.

The truth is, then, that human prophets have perceived in human nature itself the beauty of holiness, the strength of humility, the magnificence of wisdom. And these qualities seemed to them so great, so significant in their authority over the beliefs and the conduct of men that, without knowing what they were doing, they created the myth of divine origins and divine sanctions. That myth is now fading away.¹

This view immediately demands a new interpretation of education in its ends and purposes. It places the emphasis of life on man and the life here below, rather than on the life of the spirit which is to be interpreted in the light of the existence of God and of man's dependence on Him and on His will. These things are of the very nature of man, according to Maritain.

To Maritain the nature of a thing is unchanging, and thus the nature of man is the same today as it was at all times. This view of man's nature is not accepted by all writers. Hook says:

The nature of man is always relevant; but just as relevant is our decision as to what we want to make of it, and what we want men to become. At this point no metaphysical deduction, whether proceeding from materialistic or spiritualistic premises concerning the nature of "reality", can guide us.²

Here we see an essential difference in fundamental ideals between Maritain and the modern Darwinian philosophers. While admitting that there are certain accidental changes and differences in men of different ages, Maritain insists that the fundamental nature of man remains always the same. This view influences his theories of education.

Of course the job of education is not to shape the Platonist man-in-himself, but to shape a particular child belonging to a given nation, a given social environment, a given historical age. Yet before being a child of the twentieth century, an American-born or European-born child, a gifted or a retarded child,

¹A. Meiklejohn, Education between Two Worlds, p. 202.

²S. Hook, Education for Modern Man, p. 19.

this child is a child of man.¹

Maritain needs to explain what he means by man, if his above definition of the job of education is to have meaning. As to this, he says:

In answer to our question, then, "What is man?" we may give the Greek, Jewish, and Christian idea of man: man is an animal endowed with reason, whose supreme dignity is in the intellect; and man as a free individual in personal relation with God, whose supreme righteousness consists in voluntarily obeying the law of God; and man as a sinful and wounded creature called to divine life and to the freedom of grace, whose supreme perfection consists of love.²

It follows from the fundamental doctrines of Maritain that there is a Lawgiver, distinct from the will of the group, Who has given a moral standard and an absolute truth to man, and which man is by his very nature, bound to follow and learn.

Some modern educational philosophers reject the existence of a code of morals absolute in its nature, and immutable with regard to what they consider as the changing nature of man. They feel that moral conduct and sanctions are to be known and evolved from the conduct of the group rather than from the transmitted revelation of a Supreme Lawgiver. Rugg says of this view:

We can now state the moral-ethical problem for our society in our times. It is nothing less than building in our people an understanding and an acceptance of the moral resources and the obstacles in the nature of man and of society, and the facts of the power world and of creating new ethical principles and a corresponding working body of rules of conduct that will be appropriate to our times and our stage of cultural development.³

Maritain differs from these views. Because he differs from them he forms a concept of the aim of education different from that of some of the modern philosophers of education.

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 1.

²Ibid. p. 7.

³Harold Rugg, Foundations for American Education (New York: World Book Company, 1947), p. 511.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DYNAMICS OF EDUCATION

Maritain, having determined his theory of the ends of education drawn from his ideas of the end of man, proceeds to consider the dynamics of education. He divides these into, first, the inner vitality of the student's mind and the activity of the teacher; second, the basic dispositions to be fostered in the pupil; third, the fundamental norms of the teacher.

In beginning his reflections on this part of his theory of education, Maritain examines the various explanations of how we know. He begins first with that of Plato.

In order to discuss the dynamic factors in education, we must naturally reckon first with the Platonic conception: that all learning is in the learner, not in the teacher.¹

In explanation of the Platonic theory, Fuller says, in his history of philosophy:

At this point, however, we are confronted with the difficulty. After all, here and now, the mind is in the body, and is dependent upon the senses, it would seem, for its contact with external reality. But the senses never acquaint us with the universal and absolute. They present the mind only with particular, concrete data. We do not perceive redness, or mankind in general, or the law of gravitation. We perceive this or that individual man, this or that particular red or falling apple. How then can the mind ever come by general ideas and universal truths at all? It cannot get them from the senses, and yet, apparently, there is no other source save the senses for any experience whatsoever.

This difficulty Plato meets with his famous doctrine of Reminiscence or Recollection. In the Phaedrus, ... we are told that before birth the soul, living in heaven with the gods, saw the Ideas face to face. Fallen from heaven and born in the body, she retains a faint recollection of the Forms she has seen, and is reminded of them by their sensible embodiments

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 29.

with which the senses acquaint her. It is by virtue of being thus "reminded" that the soul is able to find similarity in sensible objects, to single out in them features they have in common, and to classify them according to their "type", and to give them group names.... Generally speaking, then, the growth of knowledge is simply clearer and clearer recollection of the Form of which the particular object "reminds" us. And the attainment of certainty is like exclaiming to a person whose face is vaguely familiar, but whose name we have forgotten, "Ah, now I remember perfectly who you are."¹

Maritain says of this theory of knowledge:

The student, in this way, does not acquire knowledge from the teacher, who has no real causal influence and who is at best only an occasional agent: the teacher only awakens the attention of the student to those things which he already knows, so that to learn is nothing else than to remember.²

With the coming of Christianity and especially with the harmonizing of the Aristotelian philosophy with the doctrines of the Christian religion by Thomas Aquinas, the accepted explanation of the nature of man was that of the existence of a spiritual soul through which the intellectual functions and the act of knowing was carried on.

It was with the work of Darwin and the scientific method so popular in the last century that the attention of men was turned to some other explanation of the nature of man and the operation of intelligence. It was clear that, if the existence of a spiritual soul was denied, then some other method of knowing and reasoning must be postulated, a method different from that of the religious explanation of the past. It was here that the work of modern psychologists was called upon to explain the nature of the intellectual operation, and the method of reasoning according to the evidence of their scientific investigations.

¹B.A.G. Fuller, A History of Philosophy (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), p. 99.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 29.

Theories were advanced to explain the former belief in a spiritual entity called the soul, and by the explanation of the rise of the theory, it was believed that the theory itself was discredited. The tracing of the development of such theories is dealt with by Bode, who says:

The discussion of mind-substance would not be complete, however, without recognition of the fact that to very many persons the belief in a mind-substance is determined primarily, not by argument or even by habits of thinking, but rather by the emotional reactions which have to do with the belief in a life after death. If immortality is accepted as a fact, then the theory of a substantive mind becomes a convenient way of explaining this fact.¹

When this theory of the spiritual soul is rejected, it becomes necessary to explain the nature of the acquisition of knowledge, and the process of reasoning. This next step sometimes goes under the name of Behaviorism. Of it Bode says:

With the reduction of sensations, perceptions, and images to activities or processes the behaviorist succeeds in reducing all the terms of his explanation to a simple common denominator. Everything that we call experience consists of physical reactions. It is not necessary at any point to have recourse to a different kind of reality called "mind" or "consciousness". Such terms as foresight, purpose, motive, desire, have no proper place in a psychological vocabulary. They are literary, not scientific terms. We can explain everything that a human does in the same terms with which we explain the operations of a machine.²

Another theory, embodying in itself a refutation of the old dualistic idea of the soul and body, with the action of the soul being responsible for the operation of intelligence and the process of reasoning, is advanced by Dewey, who says:

Another dualism is that of activity and passivity in knowing. Purely empirical and physical things are often supposed to be known by receiving impressions. Physical things somehow stamp themselves upon the mind or convey themselves into consciousness by means of the sense organs. Rational knowledge and knowledge of spiritual things is supposed, on the contrary, to spring from activity initiated within the mind, an activity carried on

¹B.H. Bode, How We Learn (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1940), p. 122.

²Ibid. p. 174.

better if it is kept remote from all sullyng touch of the senses and external objects.¹

Dewey continues to outline the reasons which lead him to consider such a dualism to be untenable. He says:

We shall be content to summarize the forces which tend to make the untenability of this conception obvious and to replace it by the idea of continuity. (i) The advance of physiology and the psychology associated with it have shown the connection of mental activity with that of the nervous system. Too often recognition of connection has stopped short at this point; the older dualism of soul and body has been replaced by that of the brain and the rest of the body. But in fact the nervous system is only a specialized mechanism for keeping all bodily activities working together. Instead of being isolated from them, as an organ of knowing from organs of motor response, it is the organ by which they interact responsibly with one another. The brain is essentially an organ for effecting the reciprocal adjustment to each other of the stimuli received from the environment and responses directed upon it.... (ii) The development of biology clinches this lesson, with its discovery of evolution.... The effect upon the theory of knowing is to displace the notion that it is the activity of a mere onlooker or spectator of the world, the notion which goes with the idea of knowing something complete in itself. For the doctrine of organic development means that the living creature is a part of the world, sharing its vicissitudes and fortunes, and making itself secure in its precarious dependence only as it intellectually identifies itself with the things about it, and, forecasting the future consequences of what is going on, shapes its own activities accordingly. If the living, experiencing being is an intimate participant in the activities of the world to which it belongs, then knowledge is a mode of participation, valuable in the degree in which it is effective.... (iii) The development of the experimental method as the method of getting knowledge and of making sure it is knowledge, and not mere opinion - the method of both discovery and proof - is the remaining great force in bringing about a transformation in the theory of knowledge. The experimental method has two sides. (i) On one hand, it means that we have no right to call anything knowledge except where our activity has actually produced certain physical changes in things, which agree and confirm the conception entertained. Short of such specific changes, our beliefs are only hypotheses, theories, suggestions, guesses, and are to be entertained tentatively and to be utilized as indications of experiments to be tried. (ii) On the other hand, the experimental method of thinking signifies that thinking is of avail; that it is of avail in just the degree in which the anticipation of future consequences is made on the basis of thorough observation of present conditions.... The experimental method is new as a scientific resource - as a systematized means of making knowledge, though as old as life as a practical device.... It will doubtless take a long time to secure the perception that it holds equally as to the forming and testing of ideas in social and moral matters. Men still want the crutch of dogma, of beliefs fixed by authority, to relieve them of the trouble of thinking

¹J. Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 390.

and the responsibility of directing their activity by thought.... In time the theory of knowing must be derived from the practice which is most successful in making knowledge; and then that theory will be employed to improve the methods which are less successful.¹

None of these views were unknown to Maritain, himself trained in the scientific tradition. In spite of this, adhering firmly to the philosophy of St. Thomas and the scholastic doctrine of the duality of the human nature, he built his theory of education and the manner of knowing on St. Thomas' explanation of the functions of the powers of the intellect in knowing the reality of things. It might be well at this point to outline the scholastic explanation of the theory of knowledge.

According to St. Thomas, the soul is endowed with two powers of apprehension, the sensitive, of lower order, and the intellectual, of higher order. The sensible apprehends what are called sensible species from the objects around it.

There is another genus in the powers of the soul which regards a more universal object, namely, every sensible body, and not only the body to which the soul is united. And there is yet another genus in the powers of the soul which regards a still more universal object - namely, not only the sensible body, but universally all being. Therefore it is evident that the latter two genera of the soul's powers have an operation in regard not merely to that which is united to them, but also to something extrinsic. Now, since whatever operates must in some way be united to the object in relation to which it operates, it follows of necessity that this something extrinsic, which is the object of the soul's operation, must be related to the soul in a twofold manner. First, inasmuch as this something extrinsic has a natural aptitude to be united to the soul, and to be by its likeness in the soul. In this way there are two kinds of powers, namely, the sensitive, in regard to the less common object, the sensible body; and the intellectual, in regard to the most common object, universal being.²

It is the work of the senses to abstract sensible species from the objects in which these forms are found, and this St. Thomas speaks of when he says:

¹Ibid. p. 391.

²Anton C. Pegis, Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 734.

Therefore, through the sensitive soul an animal must not only receive the species of sensible things, when it is actually affected by them, but it must also retain and preserve them.... But for the retention and preservation of these forms, the phantasy or imagination is appointed, being as it were a storehouse of forms received through the senses.... Now we must observe that as to sensible forms there is no difference between men and other animals.¹

The species thus retained are called "phantasms." This sensible species which is retained in the memory is not a universal, but a particular. It is not "tree", but "this tree", not "man", but "this man". To be received by the intellect as a universal, it must first be in the senses as a particular.

The next step in the process of knowing is for the sensible species to furnish the material from which the intellect can draw the universal form, the intelligible species. To do this, two powers of the intellect are called into play, the passive intellect which is the aspect of the intellect which learns, and in so doing, brings about the realization of its nature, and acquisition of truth. The forms which will fill it do not exist outside of the soul as intelligibles, for they are embedded in matter. To become intelligible, they must be abstracted from the sensible species, and presented to the passive intellect as intelligibles. This is done by the power known as the active intellect.

For the intellect, as we have shown above, has an operation extending to universal being. We may therefore see whether an intellect is in act of potentiality by observing first of all the nature of the relation of the intellect to universal being. For we find an intellect whose relation to universal being is that of the act of all being; and such is the divine intellect, which is the essence of God, in which, originally and virtually, all being pre-exists as in its first cause. Therefore the divine intellect is not in potentiality, but is pure act. But no created intellect can be an act in relation to the whole universal being; for then it would needs be an infinite being. Therefore no created intellect, by reason of its very being, is the act of all things intelligible; but it is compared to these intelligible things as a potentiality to act.... But the human intellect, which is the lowest in the order of intellects and most remote from the perfection of the divine intellect, is in potentiality with regard

¹Ibid. p. 742.

to things intelligible, and is at first like a clean tablet on which nothing is written as the Philosopher says. This is made clear from the fact that at first we are only in potentiality towards understanding, and afterwards we are made to understand actually. And so it is evident that with us to understand is in a way to be passive.... And consequently the intellect is a passive power.¹

The existence and the work of the active intellect is explained in the following passage from St. Thomas:

But since Aristotle did not allow that the forms of natural things exist apart from matter, and since forms existing in matter are not actually intelligible, it follows that the natures or forms of the sensible things which we understand are not actually intelligible. Now nothing is reduced from potentiality to act except by something in act; as the senses are made actual by what is actually sensible. We must therefore assign on the part of the intellect some power to make things actually intelligible, by the abstraction of the species from material conditions. And such is the necessity of positing an agent intellect.²

This process of abstracting the sensible forms by the sensitive soul, the storing of the phantasms, the abstraction from them of the intelligible universals, finally, the judgment of the intellect as to the conformity of the abstracted intelligible forms with reality, this is the method of knowing first postulated by Aristotle, and then developed and formulated by St. Thomas. It is on this basis that Maritain built his theory of knowledge and the dynamics of education. It is from this belief that he criticises the pragmatic theory of the moderns in educational philosophy. He says:

It is an unfortunate mistake to define human thought as an organ of response to the actual stimuli and situations of the environment, that is to say, to define it in terms of animal knowledge and reaction, for such a definition exactly covers the way of "thinking" proper only to animals without reason. On the contrary, it is because every human idea, to have a meaning, must attain in some measure (be it even in the symbols of a mathematical interpretation of phenomena), what things are or consist of unto themselves; it is because human thought is an instrument or rather a vital energy of knowledge or spiritual intuition (I don't mean "knowledge about", I mean "knowledge into"); it is because thinking begins, not only with difficulties but with insights, and ends up in insights which are made true by rational proving or experimental verifying, not by pragmatic sanction, that human thought is able to illumine experience, to realize desires which are human because they are rooted in the prime desire for unlimited good, and

¹Ibid. p. 747.

²Ibid. p. 749.

to dominate, control, and refashion the world. At the beginning of human action, insofar as it is human, there is truth, grasped or believed to be grasped for the sake of truth. Without trust in truth, there is no human effectiveness.¹

In considering the theory of knowledge to which Maritain subscribes, it might seem, since the intellect of the learner is equipped to consider the things of the material world, and from them to abstract the forms which make them what they are, and, by the innate power of the intellect to arrive at judgments as to their truth or falsity, that there is no place for the teacher in the acquisition of knowledge on the part of the learner. He says:

Ready-made knowledge does not, as Plato believed, exist in human souls, but the vital and active principle of knowledge does exist in each of us. The inner seeing power of intelligence, which naturally and from the very start perceives through sense-experience the primary notions on which all knowledge depends, is thereby able to proceed from what it already knows to what it does not yet know.... This inner vital principle the teacher must respect above all; his art consists in imitating the ways of the intellectual nature in its own operations. Thus the teacher has to offer to the mind either examples from experience or particular statements which the pupil is able to judge by virtue of what he already knows and from which he will go on to discover broader horizons. The teacher has further to comfort the mind of the pupil by putting before his eyes the logical connections between ideas which the analytical or deductive power of the pupil's mind is perhaps not strong enough to establish by itself.

All this boils down to the fact that the mind's natural activity on the part of the learner and the intellectual guidance on the part of the teacher are both dynamic factors in education, but that the principal agent in education, the primary dynamic factor or propelling force, is the internal vital principle in the one to be educated; the educator or teacher is only the secondary - though a genuinely effective - dynamic factor and a ministerial agent.²

This stress placed on the primacy of the learner in the process of learning is in keeping with the teachings of the philosophers of the pragmatic school in the philosophy of education. Dewey says:

The specific elements of an individual's method or way of attack upon a problem are found ultimately in his native tendencies and his acquired habits and interests. The method of one will vary from that of another

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 12.

²Ibid. p. 30.

(and properly vary) as his original instinctive capacities vary, as his past experiences and his preferences vary. Those who have already studied these matters are in possession of information which will help teachers in understanding the responses different pupils make, and help them in guiding these responses to greater efficiency.¹

Maritain is most willing to give credit to the moderns for those things which he considers admirable in their system. Of the reawakened interest in the child as the most important feature of the learning process, he says:

The actual merit of modern conceptions in education since Pestalozzi, Rousseau, and Kant, has been the rediscovery of the fundamental truth that the principal agent and dynamic factor is not the art of the teacher but the inner principle of activity, the inner dynamism of nature and of the mind.²

He insists, however, that the philosophy behind the modern theories cannot be justified in his eyes, and is something which he considers should be corrected, lest it nullify the good features of the new system. He says:

If there were time we could insist, in this connection, that the search for new methods and inspiration, as emphasized by progressive education, and what is called in Europe the "active school", should be valued, developed, and expanded - on condition that progressive education gives up its out-of-date rationalistic prejudices and utopian philosophy of life and does not forget that the teacher, too, is a real cause and agent - though only co-operating with nature - a real giver whose own dynamism, moral authority, and positive guidance are indispensable. If this complementary aspect is forgotten, the finest endeavors which arise from the mere cult of the freedom of the child will be washed away in the sands.³

Maritain is most emphatic on the point of the primary role of the student in the educative process. However, he places great emphasis on the work which must be done by the teacher, though it is not the most important work in the process. He does consider it to be essential when properly understood and carried out. He says:

The freedom of the child is not the spontaneity of animal nature, moving right from the start along the fixed determinate paths of instinct (at

¹J. Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 203.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 32.

³Ibid. p. 32.

least we usually think of animal instinct in this form, which is really too simplified, for animal instinct has a first period of progressive fixation). The freedom of the child is the spontaneity of a human and rational nature, and this largely undetermined spontaneity has its inner principle of final determination only in reason, which is not yet developed in the child.

The plastic and suggestible freedom of the child is harmed and led astray if it is not helped and guided. An education which consisted in making the child responsible for acquiring information about that of which he is ignorant, an education which only contemplated a blossoming forth of the child's instincts, and which rendered the teacher a tractable and useless attendant, is but a bankruptcy of education and of the responsibility of adults toward the youth. The right of the child to be educated requires that the educator shall have moral authority over him, and this authority is nothing else than the duty of the adult to the freedom of youth.¹

This help and guidance of which Maritain speaks is not the rigid discipline once accepted as the proper climate for the school. It must be remembered that, to Maritain, the principal agent in the educative process is the seeking intellect of the learner, guided and directed by the teacher, but not dominated in such a way as to take the initiative from the learner and make him simply a vehicle for the educational paths of the teacher's thought.

Not only Maritain holds this view, but also other Catholic writers of authority in the educational field. Redden and Ryan say:

There is a type of discipline, however, that is outmoded, and that never was in agreement with sound pedagogical practice. Such discipline cannot be too strongly condemned. In that form of discipline, the child is trained to absolute obedience without reserve. A lock-step procedure is employed, designed to "break the will", make the individual do those things he dislikes, and force his submission. This kind of discipline, which is mere servitude, presents no opportunity for the development of freedom, independence, initiative, or resourcefulness. It is against this extreme form of discipline that educators and pupils alike justly rebel. Such a discipline, however, should not be confused with right and true discipline, wherein sympathetic but reasonably firm teachers take positive steps to acquaint the individual with the purposes of rules that must be obeyed, by showing him that such observance will assist in the development of good moral habits that have permanent values.²

¹Ibid. p. 33.

²John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 506.

Maritain himself leaves no doubt as to his stand on the question of guidance as opposed to harsh discipline. He says:

Education by the rod is positively bad education. If from a love of paradox I were to say something on its behalf, I should only observe that it has been able, actually, to produce some strong personalities, because it is difficult to kill the internal principle of spontaneity in living beings, and because this principle occasionally developes more powerfully when it reacts and sometimes revolts against constraint, fear, and punishment than when everything is made easy, lenient, and psychotechnically compliant to it.¹

He continues in the same passage to consider the possible effect of completely undisciplined education. He says:

Strangely enough, we may wonder whether an education which yields itself entirely to the sovereignty of the child, and which suppresses any obstacle to be overcome, does not result in making students both indifferent and too docile, too passively permeable to anything the teacher is saying. However that may be, it is still true that birch and taws are bad educational measures, and that any education which considers the teacher as the principal agent perverts the very nature of the educational task.²

Another philosopher of education, Henderson, says of discipline:

Children must learn self-control, self-discipline, intelligent self-direction, in the interests of all. This is never learned without discipline from without, but it must be a discipline aimed at making itself unnecessary.³

Maritain sums up his views on education insofar as he has dealt with them in the following manner:

We have had a view of the being who is to be formed into a true human person, perfecting himself by knowledge and by love, and capable of giving himself; and we have seen that to achieve rationality and freedom this being must have knowledge taught and discipline, and these require the office of the teacher.⁴

Maritain considers next the question of the dispositions which must be

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 32.

²Ibid. p. 32.

³S.V.P. Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, p. 258.

⁴J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 36.

fostered in the child, the primary agent in the work of education. He says:

If the nature and spirit of the child are the principal agent in education, then, obviously, the fundamental dispositions to be fostered in this principal agent are the very basis of the task of education. They are rooted in nature but they may be warped, and they need to be carefully cultivated.¹

He proceeds to consider these dispositions, the first of which he considers to be the love of truth. He considers that the student should be led to know the truth of things, and this is the work of the intellect. Once known, the truth becomes attractive to the will of the person, and this attraction is what is called love. This knowledge depends on the demonstration of the guide or teacher, since, in many things, it is not immediately apparent. In this view he follows the teaching of St. Thomas, who says:

Now there are some intelligible things which have no necessary connection with first principles: e.g. contingent propositions, the denial of which does not involve a denial of first principles. And to such the intellect does not assent of necessity. But there are some propositions which have a necessary connection with first principles, namely, demonstrable conclusions, a denial of which involves a denial of first principles. And to these the intellect assents of necessity, when once it is aware (by demonstration) of the necessary connection of these conclusions with the principles; but it does not assent of necessity until through the demonstration it recognizes the necessity of such a connection.²

This love of truth Maritain considers to be the primary tendency of any intellectual creature, since his intellect is ordained to the knowledge of the truth. It is a disposition to be fostered since the child is not able by his own efforts always to distinguish the truth of things, but must be helped to this by the guidance of the teacher.

Along with this love of truth must go the love of justice and heroic deeds, as well as the love of the good. Maritain is a transcendentalist, and as such, requires the fostering of the love of the good, the concept of which

¹Ibid. p. 36.

²A.C. Pegis, Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, p. 779.

is interchangeable with that of the true.

Maritain would have the instructor foster in the child the feeling of happiness in the very fact of his existence. By this he means a facing of reality as regards the conditions of his life. This is to be fostered by love and confidence on the part of the child, and genuine interest and love on the part of the teacher. He says:

I would describe this disposition as the attitude of a being who exists gladly, is unashamed of existing, stands upright in existence, and for whom to be and to accept the natural limitations of existence are matters of equally simple assent.¹

It could be spoken of as freedom from fear, the fear of the responsibilities of human living, and is recognized in modern psychology as one of the traits to be fostered in the mental health of children, as a protection against the feeling of insecurity so harmful to the proper development of the child.

Maritain says of this feeling of security:

And it is so deeply and elementarily vital that the wounds it happens to undergo in many children, often very early, from family life and social life - spoken of today as an inferiority complex with its manifold morbid "compensations" - are especially grievous and difficult to cure. "Fear and trembling", undoubtedly, are part of the great experiences of the human soul, when it has become mature and enters the mysterious avenues of the spirit, but they are bad beginnings in education.²

Maritain next considers the formation of the habits of work. By this he means the proper attitude to work to be done, not simply as activity, since the outward appearance of busyness, or the lack of it, is not always a criterion of productive industry. It is not this lack of laziness of which he speaks, but something else. He says of this disposition:

I am speaking of something deeper and more human, a respect for the job to be done, a feeling of faithfulness, and responsibility regarding it.... I am convinced that when this fundamental disposition, which is

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 37.

²Ibid. p. 38.

the first natural move toward self-discipline, this probity in regard to work is marred, an essential basis of human morality is lacking.¹

Modern educators realize this very well. One of the basic characteristics that they try to inculcate in the students of today is the sense of responsibility to the work to be done. However, some give different reasons for this sense of responsibility than Maritain does. Witness the writings of Dewey:

What makes it (the work of a carpenter) continuous, consecutive, or concentrated is that each earlier act prepares the way for later acts, while these take account of or reckon with the results already attained - the basis of all responsibility.²

Dewey here places the basis of responsibility on the activity done, the chain-reaction produced by the doing of things, while Maritain would place it in the nature of the person, a quality which is demanded by the spiritual desire for the perfection of the individual.

Henderson treats of this desire for work well done when she says:

Even if a man did not need to work for a living, he would need to work in order to live. A playboy knows nothing about life's realities and life's possibilities. One cannot become a strong man or woman without a struggle, without the joy which comes from succeeding in carrying out one's purposes, without the lessons we can learn from failure. It is only through struggle³ and effort that man develops his highest talents, his finest potentialities.

Those who are critical of modern trends in education are also explicit on the point of the inner realization of the value of worth-while work. They claim to detect a lack of this appreciation in the modern educational systems. Iddings Bell says:

Man exists to do creatively, in the most craftsmanlike manner possible, all things that must be done: great things like government, or mothering, or the healing of minds and bodies; small things like making beds, or hoeing corn, or driving a truck; things in the public eye like making speeches, or unleashing atomic energy, or making peace; obscure things like selling groceries, or running a bus, or teaching school. He finds inner peace who works at whatever is in front of him, not for the pay he gets or for what he

¹Ibid. p. 38.

²J. Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 392.

³S.V.P. Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, p. 82.

can buy with that pay, not for applause or gratitude, but for sheer joy in creativity. There are a vast number of tasks to be performed in this world, most of them not romantic. They may be done in one of two ways: just to get them over with as quickly and as painlessly as possible, in which case they become a monotonous burden hard to bear; or each as beautifully and thoroughly as possible, in which case life is good to the taste.

Our fathers knew the joy that lies in craftsmanship. They did not advocate it; they took it for granted. We have forgotten it, overlooked it. Craftsmanship is no longer practiced, taught or praised.¹

The same idea is expressed by a more recent writer, a Canadian, who

says:

The sensible and fair thing is surely to let children know by experience in school that life may be difficult and disagreeable as well as delightful and simple; that theirs is a world for workers, and that work demands their best effort; and to help them to acquire in school such firm habits and such clear principles as will enable them, whether they gain or lose the world, to do their duty in it with diligence and with intelligence. Nothing could be less practical or progressive than the current fashion of keeping those who should be achieving the age of discretion in ignorant, if contented immaturity.²

Maritain notes another disposition to be fostered, namely, that of co-operation. In this modern educators would find him in agreement with their views on the matter. He considers this tendency to be as natural as the tendency to social and political life.

Having dealt first with the importance of the learner in the educative process, Maritain now turns to the dispositions necessary in the ministerial agent, the teacher.

Though Maritain stresses the essential role of the intellect of the learner in the acquisition of knowledge, he considers the role of the teacher of equal importance. Though the pupil could acquire knowledge by the exercise

¹Bernard Iddings Bell, Crisis in Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1949), p. 22.

²Hilda Neatby, So Little for the Mind (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Limited, 1953), p. 18.

of his intelligence without guidance on the part of the teacher, it would be so difficult to do so, and so possible to err without some authority in learning, that the role of the teacher is of great importance. Maritain proceeds to outline rules for the teacher. The first rule of which he speaks is to foster those dispositions which enable the principal agent to grow in the life of the mind. In this matter he has written "it is clear, in this connection, that the task of the teacher is above all one of liberation."¹ To understand this statement, it is necessary to consider Maritain's ideas on the true freeing of personality. He writes:

The same man in his entirety is an individual and a person: he is a person by reason of the spiritual subsistence of his soul, and he is an individual by reason of that principle of nonspecific diversity which is matter, and which makes the components of a same species different from each other. My individuality and my personality, thus defined, are two aspects of my whole substantial being, to which correspond two different poles of attraction for my inner and moral development. I may develop along the lines of personality, that is, toward the mastery of independence of my spiritual self. Or I may develop along the lines of individuality, that is, toward the letting loose of the tendencies which are present in me by virtue of matter and heredity.

Such being the case, certain educators confuse personality with individuality, and mistake the display of sheer individuality for the development of personality. Personality means interiority to oneself; the internal selfhood grows in proportion as the life of reason and freedom dominates over the life of instinct and sensual desire - which implies self-sacrifice, striving toward self-perfection and love. But individuality, in the strict Aristotelian sense in which I am using the word, individuality means the material ego, the displaying of which consists in giving a free hand to the irrational trends of this ego. Thus, while becoming the center of everything, the ego is in reality scattered among cheap desires or overwhelming passions, and finally submitted to the determinism of matter.²

It is in this way that Maritain considers the work of the teacher one of liberation. The liberation of the personality as opposed to the development or liberation of the individuality. In practice, the application of this principle calls for the development or liberation of those energies in the learner

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 39.

²Ibid. p. 34.

which will lead to the liberation of the personality. This is to be done essentially by the encouragement of the desirable traits. Maritain says:

To liberate the good energies is the best way of repressing the bad ones, though repression is also needed, but only as a secondary means, as dealing particularly with that part of animal training in human education of which I spoke in my first chapter, and even so it is useful only on condition that the repression of the bad tendencies will always be bound up with enlightenment and encouragement. Encouragement is as fundamentally necessary as humiliation is harmful. A mere prohibition of evil-doing is less efficacious than illumination about good that this evil-doing will spoil. The real art is to make the child heedful of his own resources and potentialities for the beauty of well-doing.¹

This attitude is in keeping with the recommendations of the modern psychologists of education. They hold that punishment, when it must be applied, should be constructive, aimed at emphasizing the good rather than stressing the evil. Sorenson says:

The teacher who praises a child for his work does so in order to stimulate him; even more, when she reproves him, she does so to check undesirable behavior or to spur him to greater achievement.

In this connection, it may be pointed out that one of the distinguishing features of very good and very bad teachers is the nature of the responses that they make to the efforts of their pupils. The superior teachers nod approval, speak encouragingly, and in general react positively. The poor ones, on the other hand, are inclined to be negative in their reactions, depreciating their pupils' efforts, scolding them, and finding fault with their work.

Another writer on the subject of adolescent psychology treats of the same subject by saying:

Many adolescents develop one or more of three fears, all associated with school work: fear of teachers, fear of examinations, and fear of reciting. None of these is necessary, all of them are destructive to either progress in school or personal development, and all of them are learned from experiences in school.³

¹Ibid. p. 39.

²Herbert Sorenson, Psychology in Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, Inc., 1940), p. 308.

³Luella Cole, Psychology of Adolescence (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1952), p. 135.

Another authority on the subject, Judd, says of this question of punishment or repression of evil attitudes:

The relation of punishment to the development of patterns of behavior is of vital concern because, when punishment disturbs a child, the consequences are often serious. Many a school failure is to be traced to incompatibility between a pupil and a teacher which had its origin in punishment that seemed to the child to be unjust or unnecessary.

It is not, however, merely the unfortunate consequences of punishment that make this form of treatment of children questionable. The purpose of all social treatment should be positive. If punishment merely checks action, it contributes little to the development of the individual who is punished. If useful conduct can be substituted for undesirable conduct, a higher result will be attained. Punishment should always be followed, therefore, by inducement to behavior which is wholesome and constructive.¹

It seems justifiable, in this case, to consider punishment as any action which expresses disapproval of the actions of the child, not necessarily in the narrow sense of corporal punishment. It is in this sense that Maritain would have us accept his teaching, that the positive release of good actions will, in the majority of cases, be of more lasting benefit than the punitive suppression of those considered harmful. Henderson expresses the same idea in other words:

A teacher's attitude toward his pupils' misbehavior should be like that of the physician toward his patient. Not shock, not indignation, not irritation, not disgust, but a determination to understand, to heal, to help. How to do this is the study of a lifetime. The greatest reward that a teacher can hope for is to see boys and girls improving a little and growing somewhat in self-discipline, in thoughtfulness for others, in unselfishness, in intelligence, and in strength.²

Here, again, the remarks made about misbehavior can be interpreted as applying to wrong attitudes to truth and learning. Again, the approach is a positive one.

As another primary rule for teachers, Maritain would have the teacher center attention on the inner depths of personality, or, in other words, to lay stress on inwardness and the internalization of the educational influence. He

¹Charles H. Judd, Educational Psychology (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939), p. 544.

²S.V.P. Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, p. 374.

would have the teacher instill in the student a deep appreciation of the true field of education, the development of the intellectual power of thought. Unless the student sees and feels the vital connection between the knowledge he has and the knowledge toward which he is approaching, then, to Maritain, the work of real education is not being done.

The pressure on the surface level of the mind of ready-made formulas of knowledge, as elaborated from the socialized intellectual life of adults, and only made cheaper and more rudimentary for the use of children, and the pressure on the surface level of the will, either of compulsory discipline or of extraneous incentives motivated by self-interest and competition, have left the internal world of the child's soul either dormant or bewildered and rebellious.¹

The teacher must recognize this inner life of the pupil, must strive to direct the student's mind to a recognition of it, and must do everything in his power to see that it is fostered and encouraged. From this recognition flows the respect that the teacher must have for the efforts of the student to reach truth, must see that nothing in his approach to the student's beginning awareness of this inner power blights or inhibits it. It is for this reason that the use of sarcasm on the part of the teacher toward the intellectual efforts of the child is so rightly condemned by all right-thinking educators. In the same way, any tendency on the part of the teacher to pass from one point of knowledge to another until the first is thoroughly understood by the student is poor technique in the educational field. Maritain says:

Parenthetically, it is with reference to this preconscious spiritual dynamism of human personality that keeping personal contact with the pupil is of such great import, not only as a better technique for making study more attractive and stimulating, but above all to give to that mysterious identity of the child's soul, which is unknown to himself, and which no techniques can reach, the comforting assurance of being in some way recognized by a human personal gaze, inexpressible either in concepts or words.²

Again, on the same subject, he says:

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 40.

²Ibid. p. 41.

With regard to the development of the human mind, neither the richest material facilities, nor the richest equipment in methods, information, and erudition are the main point. The great thing is the awakening of the inner resources and creativity. The cult of technical means considered as improving the mind and producing science by their own virtue must give way to respect for the spirit and dawning intellect of man. Education thus calls for an intellectual sympathy and intuition on the part of the teacher, concern for the questions and difficulties with which the mind of youth may be entangled without being able to give expression to them, a readiness to be at hand with the lessons of logic and reasoning that invite to action the unexercised reason of the youth. No tricks can do that, no set of techniques, but only personal attention to the inner blossoming of the rational nature and then confronting that budding reason with a system of rational knowledge.¹

Maritain states that the most important thing in the life of reason is the intellectual insight or intuition. This, he says, cannot be developed by direct training, yet there is a way in which the teacher can do a great deal to foster it. Concerning this, he writes:

Yet if the teacher keeps in view above all the inner center of vitality at work in the preconscious depths of the life of the intelligence, he may center the acquisition of knowledge and solid formation of the mind on the freeing of the child's and the youth's intuitive power. By what means? By moving forward along the paths of spontaneous interest and natural curiosity, by grounding the exercise of memory in intelligence, and primarily by giving courage, by listening a great deal, and by causing the youth to trust and give expression to those spontaneous poetic or noetic impulses of his own which seem to him fragile and bizarre, because they are not assured by any social sanction - and in fact any awkward gesture of rebuff or untimely advice on the part of the teacher can crush such timid sproutings and push them back into the shell of the unconscious.

On the same point, Brubacher says:

Education is a social process, a process of sharing between the various members of the group. This being the case, nothing could be more absurd than to exclude from the group the person who has the most to contribute, the teacher. But it is equally absurd to think that the teacher is the only one who has anything to share. Freedom, thus, is not something for children but not for the teacher, for the immature but not for the mature. On the contrary, children can only grow in freedom if the teacher is free to advise how the capacities of individuals can be brought to richer fruition.

¹Ibid. p. 43.

²Ibid. p. 43.

Such a function he must perform, however, not as a dictator, but as a counselor.¹

Far from claiming that the matter of education is solely one of intellectual intuition, Maritain stresses the use of material things as a technique of good teaching. Realia should be used so that the student can receive the sense impressions from which the intelligible phantasms can be drawn. He says:

I should like, moreover, to suggest that, in order to set free creative and perceptive intuition, the path through which it is naturally awakened, the path of sense-perception and sense-experience and imagination, should be respected and followed as far as possible by the teacher.²

The influence of the teacher in this awakening of the spiritual intuition of the student depends on the attitude of the teacher. Maritain says of this:

Finally, the very mood of the teaching is here of crucial import. If the teacher himself is concerned with discerning and seeing, with getting vision, rather than with collecting facts and opinions, and if he handles his burden of knowledge so as to see through it into the reality of things, then in the mind of the student the power of intuition will be awakened and strengthened unawares, by the very intuitivity traversing such teaching.³

Maritain would also stress the value of certain subject-matter as the most valuable in the development of intellectual power. In this he is of the group who are called the traditionalists. He considers a liberal education as the best, not only as an education, but also as a preparation for whatever vocation the student is to follow in later years. He writes:

The knowledge which is "of most worth" - I don't mean which has the most practical value, I mean which makes the mind penetrate into those things which are richest in truth and intelligibility - such knowledge affords by itself the best mental training, for it is by grasping the object and having itself seized and vitalized by truth that the human mind

¹John S. Brubacher, Modern Philosophies of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1939), p. 302.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 44.

³Ibid. p. 45.

gains both its strength and its freedom. It is not by the gymnastics of its faculties, it is by truth that it is set free, when truth is really known, that is, vitally assimilated by the insatiable activity which is rooted in the depths of self.¹

The whole teaching of Maritain on the proper method of teaching may be found in his summing up of the fundamental rules for the teacher. In it he shows that he is heartily in accord with the teachings of the modern philosophers on education in this matter. He says:

To summarize: What is learned should never be passively or mechanically received, as dead information which weighs down and dulls the mind. It must rather be actively transformed by understanding into the very life of the mind, and thus strengthen the latter, as wood thrown into fire and transformed into flame makes the fire stronger. But a big mass of damp wood thrown into the fire only puts it out. Reason which receives knowledge in a servile manner does not really know and is only depressed by a knowledge which is not its own but that of others. On the contrary, reason which receives knowledge by assimilating it vitally, that is, in a free and liberating manner, really knows, and is exalted in its very activity by this knowledge which henceforth is its own. Then it is that reason really masters the things learned.²

¹Ibid. p. 51.

²Ibid. p. 50.

CHAPTER V

VARIOUS STAGES OF EDUCATION

In this section of his work on education, Maritain treats of the principal stages of education. These he considers to be three:

As to the principal stages in education, let us note that there are three great periods in education. I should like to designate them as the rudiments (or elementary education,) the humanities (comprising both secondary and college education), and advanced studies (comprising graduate schools and higher specialized learning.) And these periods correspond not only to three natural chronological periods in the growth of the youth but also to three naturally distinct and qualitatively determinate spheres of psychological development, and, accordingly, of knowledge.¹

Maritain, along with many other educators, asserts that the child is not a small adult. While this is true of the physical aspect of the child, it is equally true, and of much greater significance, of the psychological structure of the child. Of this he says:

In the realm of physical training, of psychophysical conditioning, of animal and experimental psychology, contemporary education has understood more and more perfectly that the child of man is not just a diminutive man.²

On this point John B. Morgan says:

Although the theory that the child is merely an adult in miniature has not been as vigorously defended as some other theories, it has been explicit in much educational practice. It is a natural outgrowth from an exaggerated emphasis upon the importance of adult life and a lack of regard for the significance of childhood. Most childish acts are useless

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 38.

²Ibid. p. 59.

and absurd, according to this theory, and children should be "seen and not heard." Play is valuable only as it prepares children for adult life. Adult motives are read into the random or unthinking acts of the child.

Modern psychology has changed the focus of interest. The adult is now considered as the grown-up child instead of the child's being regarded as the miniature adult.¹

Similarly, Judd writes:

The educational processes carried on by the school must fit themselves to the growth processes which take place in the bodily organs.... An infant has a nervous system, but, ... the nervous system must mature before it can perform the functions which the school aims to cultivate.... There is a succession of changes during the school period. A child must learn to use oral language and interpret the meanings of words before he can be taught to read. He must be able to count before he can be taught to add. All the higher stages of education depend on the acquisition by the individual of the fundamental, or rudimentary, ideas and skills taught in the early grades.²

Sorenson, on the same theme, has this to say:

The period when the annual increments of mental growth are greatest merely from growing older are the preschool and elementary-school periods of life. During high-school years, growth through maturation is much slower, and it may be considered as reaching its limit during college years.

Maritain appears to go beyond the position taken above in asserting that there is a special knowledge proper to children, a knowledge which differs from that proper to other stages in the development of man.

The knowledge to be given to youth is not the same knowledge as that of adults, it is an intrinsically and basically different knowledge, which is not knowledge in the state of science, such as that possessed by the mind of an adult, but the specific knowledge fitted to quicken and perfect the original world of thought of the child and the adolescent. Consequently I should like to emphasize that at each stage the knowledge must be of a sort fitted to the learners and conceived as reaching its perfection within their universe of thought during a distinct period of their development,

¹John B. Morgan, Child Psychology (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. 1942), p. 9.

²Charles H. Judd, Educational Psychology, p. 462.

³H. Sorenson, Psychology in Education, p. 272.

instead of laying the foundations of a single sphere of knowledge which would grow in a continuous and uniform way until it became the science of the adult, where alone it would attain perfection.¹

Maritain becomes more explicit when he writes:

The universe of a child is the universe of imagination - of an imagination which evolves little by little into reason. The knowledge which has to be given to the child is knowledge in a state of story, an imaginative grasp of the things and values of the world.²

In this view Maritain is in accord with Aristotle's theory of knowledge. This theory holds that the mind of a child is a "tabula rasa" at birth. All ideas which later come to it are introduced through the senses. The first years of a child's life are spent in the acquisition of sense images with no great attempt to coordinate these images with reality. The faculty which is most active at this time of life is the imagination. Morgan writes, "Imagination is a subjective recombination of the materials of experience in a manner which may or may not conform to facts,"³ and Kelly states, "Imagination is the mental power of forming representations of material objects which are not actually present to the senses."⁴ Because the world of imagination is the child's mental world, it is difficult for him to distinguish the imaginary from the real. Kelly writes:

The young child has difficulty in distinguishing between imagination and reality. He peoples his world with all sorts of things, and the inanimate objects around him are furnished with life; the doll to a little girl is a real baby, the toy soldier to a boy is a real soldier. The small child lives in a world of play, folklore, fairy tales, and nursery

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 59.

²Ibid. p. 60.

³J. Morgan, Child Psychology, p. 267.

⁴W. Kelly, Educational Psychology (New York: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1941), p. 79.

rimes. Children in play imagine themselves other than they are; they transform themselves into parent, teacher, salesman, shopkeeper, etc., and fulfill all the functions of neighbors and citizens with dignity and solemnity.¹

It is this quality of imaginative thinking proper to the child that Maritain would make the basis of elementary education. He realizes the difficulty which the child may have in distinguishing the imaginary from the real. In this he is not alone among educators. Judd writes:

If imagination is merely an unrestrained activity, it is of little value except for the recreation which it provides the individual. When imagination is unrestrained, it is called "fancy." In fancy one builds castles in the air, but one does not expect to live in them. Excessive imagination of the purely fanciful type is to be discouraged in children.²

Maritain warns against unrestrained imagination in the child in these words:

The child's mentality may be compared in some ways with that of primitive man, and this mentality tends by itself toward magic, and whatever effort the teacher may make, his teaching always runs the risk of being caught and engulfed in a magic ocean. In his task of civilizing the child's mind, therefore, he must progressively tame the imagination to the rule of reason, whilst ever remembering that the proportionally tremendous work of the child's intellect, endeavoring to grasp the external world, is accomplished under the vital and perfectly normal rule of imagination.³

Maritain sees the cultivation of the imaginative force in the child as the foundation of developing reason. In the course of the child's development and learning, the reason will appear through the workings of imagination. As the child develops there will be a mingling of imagination and reason and in this there may be a danger for the child unless proper guidance is given.

On the other hand the vitality and intuitiveness of the spirit are quick in the young child and sometimes pierce the world of his imaginative thought with the purest and most surprising flashes, as if his spirit,

¹W. Kelly, Educational Psychology, p. 85.

²C.H. Judd, Educational Psychology, p. 336.

³J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 60.

being not yet both strengthened and organized by the exercise of reason, enjoyed a kind of bounding, temperamental, and lucid freedom. At the same time, however, the immature workings of instinct and the violence of nature make him capable of intense resentment, wickedness, and manifold perversion. This vitality of the spirit should be relied upon as an invaluable factor in the first stages of education. Even from a purely naturalistic point of view it is a pity to see the child's mysterious expectant gravity and his resources as regards spiritual life neglected or trampled upon by his elders, either from some positivist bias or because they think it their duty, when they deal with children, to make themselves childish.¹

Redden and Ryan also consider the control of the imagination of great importance in the teaching of children. They state, in their Catholic Philosophy of Education:

Training of the imagination must be subject at all times to those principles which are derived from a correct interpretation of the true nature of the individual. Such principles both direct the proper expression to be given to the imagination, and, at the same time, emphasize the need for careful guidance and supervision, to prevent distorted development and undue exaggeration of this power. It is only by the application of such principles that the imagination can function in ways which are wholesome, ennobling, and which tend to further its right development in the total work of intelligent education.²

To Maritain the state of wonder and imagination which are natural to the child should be the basis for the beginnings of education. It is through these states that the exercise of reason is developed. By the cultivation of these activities the interest and pleasure in learning are fostered and the future intellectual development of the child made natural and enjoyable.

The period of childhood gradually merges into that of adolescence. The dominant role of the imagination slowly gives way to that of reason. In the former stage, the interests of the child are centered on the physical phenomena of the things which surround him. The dawning power of reason begins to posit questions which, until this time, have not been in evidence.

Psychologists are agreed that the problems which arise at this time

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 61.

²J. Redden and F. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 235.

are not limited to the intellectual field, but rather are a compilation of problems in many fields, physical, moral, emotional and intellectual.

Judd writes:

Changes in interests and in methods of reacting to the world occur as phases of the general transition from childhood to a later stage of development. When childhood is left behind, the individual looks forward and interests himself in the responsibilities of adult life. This forward look is in sharp contrast with the circumscribed selfishness of the earlier period of life, when the mental horizon is narrow and bodily strength is limited. The attitudes of adolescents, like their physical structures, are symptoms of the general process of maturing.¹

Cole says:

Near the beginning of the adolescent period the boy or girl achieves sexual maturity and, in some specific capacities, intellectual maturity as well. By the end of adolescence, physical growth is complete and intellectual growth nearly so. Only severe deprivation can prevent an organism from coming into its bodily and mental maturity. The real problems of adolescence center therefore about emotional, social, moral and economic problems. Solution of these is necessary if the individual is to emerge from the childish attitudes and reactions with which he confronts life at puberty and become an accepted member of adult society.²

Maritain tends to concentrate on intellectual development at this period in the life of the child.

The universe of the adolescent is a transition state on the way to the universe of man. Judgment and intellectual strength are developing but are not yet really acquired. Such a mobile and anxious universe evolves under the rule of the natural impulses and tendencies of intelligence - an intelligence which is not yet matured and strengthened by those inner living energies, the sciences, arts and wisdom, but which is sharp and fresh, eager to pass judgment on everything, both trustful and exacting, and which craves intuitive sight.³

¹C.H. Judd, Educational Psychology, p. 461.

²L. Cole, Psychology of Adolescence, p. 5.

³J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 61.

Since for Maritain the proper end of education is always intellectual, he considers that the emphasis in adolescent education should and must be centered on the acquisition of truth.

The knowledge which has to develop in the adolescent is knowledge appealing to the natural powers and gifts of the mind, knowledge as tending toward all things by the natural instinct of intelligence. The mental atmosphere for adolescence should be one of truth to be embraced. Truth is the inspiring force needed in the education of the youth - truth rather than erudition and self-consciousness - all-pervading truth rather than the objectively isolated truth at which each of the diverse sciences aims.¹

For Maritain, then, this is a fundamental principle, one that colors all his thinking, concerning the education of the adolescent. It has been less exclusively emphasized by others in the educational field. The necessity for other kinds of training than intellectual has been stressed.

Butts, in his work, A Cultural History of Education, says:

In the middle 1930's the critical social situation in the United States and in the world made it clear to the "frontier" group of progressive educators that the aims and curriculum of schools and colleges should consider more fully the needs of society and should be based upon a rounded conception of the desirable social system that should be achieved in the United States. Prominent spokesmen among progressive educators urged that the traditional aims of education should be reinterpreted in the light of the newer conceptions of an experimentalist view of human nature and an industrial view of democratic society.²

Lodge, in his work, Philosophy of Education, contrasts the various schools of modern philosophical thought in this regard, and says:

What effect does the adoption of philosophical principle have upon the subject matter of education? Realists then, almost always, do insist upon its importance, and upon the importance of selecting the "right" subjects. The authority of the realist philosopher Herbart is invoked on behalf of the view that the mind is what it studies. When we apprehend, the content apprehended is just taken in - i.e. taken into the nervous system via sensation, and established there by association - without alteration, except

¹Ibid. p. 62.

²R. Freeman Butts, A Cultural History of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947) p. 643.

insofar as interaction with other contents, similarly established or in process of being apprehended, brings about alteration.¹

The same writer, setting out the ideas of those he would call the Idealists, says of their theories:

Other idealists, such as Plotinus, summed up the view of antiquity by pointing to the "three pathways" of love, art and the pursuit of knowledge: that is to say, to the three ideals of creating beauty and goodness in human life, and creating beautiful objects in the environment of human life, and creating sciences with the ideal of truth as their aim, inculcating truthfulness as the dominant human virtue. All their "pathways" were regarded as leading to the same goal: the philosophical and mystical insight into the ultimate recesses of a reality envisaged as spiritual, as a perfect Self, transcending in its absolute perfection, the resources of the merely empirical, everyday self of human beings, but capable of endowing the earnest seeker with some of its own transcendental significance.²

This view would seem to be in keeping with Maritain's attitude regarding the general purpose of adolescent education. The same writer, Lodge, explains the views of another school, the pragmatists, when he writes:

The pragmatist, with his belief that problems, unlike misfortunes, tend to come singly, one after another, has no special use for the systematic "subjects" in which the realist believes. He does not wish a student to be turned into a Latinist, or an analytical chemist, or a medieval historian, knowing everything of one subject and nothing about everything else. Books intended to be used for reference purposes may well be put together systematically; but when it comes to the growing members of the community, he would prefer them to be taught how to use reference books - viz., when wanted, and for purposes of reference - rather than to be turned into walking books of reference. Subject matter for the pragmatist is accordingly an excuse for training a student in suitable techniques, techniques for the direction and control of events.³

Maritain considers the adolescent as one in whom the power of intellect is awaking and reaching toward the truth of things. It is the work of education to place that truth before the seeking youth, using every means to satisfy the cravings which Maritain believes to be strong within the young. Of this seeking for truth Maritain writes:

¹Rupert C. Lodge, Philosophy of Education (New York: Harper & Brothers, revised edition, 1947), p. 203.

²Ibid. p. 209.

³Ibid. p. 212.

Here we are confronted with a natural and instinctive impulse toward some all-embracing truth, which must be shaped little by little to critical reflection, but which I should like to compare primarily to the trend of the first thinkers of ancient Greece toward an undifferentiated world of science, wisdom, and poetry. Common sense and the spontaneous pervasiveness of natural insight and reasoning constitute the dynamic unity of the adolescent's universe of thought, before wisdom may achieve in man a stabler unity.¹

To Maritain, the sum total of knowledge is able to be united and simplified into one truth which becomes more and more apparent as the wisdom of the learner approaches perfection. This belief he holds in common with the Idealists, of whose philosophy on this point Lodge writes:

All pathways of self-development, faithfully pursued, call to the inner nissus, and tend to culminate in a progressive series of idealist insights into the nature of reality as ultimately spiritual. Thus the physicist may start by believing that what he is investigating is the nature of "objective" reality, and that he is leaving the self entirely out of the picture. But the personal equation is not thus naively to be dismissed. After a while, when he becomes immersed in the deeper reaches of his subject, if he asks himself, What am I really studying?, he begins to realize that he is living in a world of definitions and consequences, that he is investigating the logical consequences involved in the questions he is posing, that he is setting himself problems, and that his answers are the responses of his self to the questions his self has raised. It is then that he realizes that physics passes over, without a definite break, into metaphysics or philosophy proper, and that his mind has apparently never left the realm of mind, but that "nature" is simply the mind's "other", its social counterpart, in which the relation of creator and creation seems, in the end, to coincide.²

This love and desire for the truth and for the meaning of reality is proper to the adolescent, and must be kept in mind by educators who are entrusted with the planning of curriculum for the adolescent. Maritain says:

Just as imagination was the mental heaven of childhood, so now ascending reason with its freshness, boldness, and first sparkling ambitions, is the mental heaven of adolescence; it is with reasoning that adolescence happens to be intoxicated. Here is a natural impulse to be turned to account by education, both by stimulating and by disciplining reason.³

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 62.

²R.C. Lodge, Philosophy of Education, p. 210.

³J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 62.

Maritain would not place the emphasis on the subject matter but rather on the way in which it is taught. Since the adolescent is intrigued with the underlying meaning of the things he studies, this can be used as a directive as to the method of instruction. The intellectual curiosity of the student should be aroused so as to help him acquire the meaning of the truth and beauty contained in the science or art itself.

It is less a question of sharing in the very activity of the scientist or the poet than of nourishing oneself intellectually on the results of their achievement. Still less is it a question of developing one's own mental skill and taste in the fashion of the dilettante by gaining a superficial outlook on scientific or artistic procedures or the ways and means, the grammar, logic, methodology thereof.¹

This is in keeping with the modern criticism of the so-called "formal discipline" of the past. Rather than stress the mechanical memorization of facts and events, the teacher has the task of stirring up the pupil to make critical use of his intelligence so as to reach conclusions for himself, thus making the acquired knowledge vital and meaningful. Maritain continues:

The objective of education is to see to it that the youth grasps this truth or beauty by the natural power and gifts of his mind and the natural intuitive energy of his reason backed up by his whole sensuous, imaginative, and emotional dynamism. In doing that a liberal education will cause his natural intelligence to follow in the footsteps of those intellectual virtues which are the eminent merit of the real scientist or artist. The practical conditions for all that is to strive to penetrate as deeply as possible into the great achievements of the human mind rather than to tend toward material erudition and atomized memorization.²

It is the truth of the particular subject matter or science which is the objective of the youth's learning rather than complete mastery of the subject matter at this stage of education. This should be kept in mind by the teachers.

¹Ibid. p. 63.

²Ibid. p. 63.

Maritain continues on the same subject:

So I should say that the youth is to learn and know music in order to understand the meaning of music rather than in order to become a composer. He must learn and know physics in order to understand the meaning of physics rather than to become a physicist.¹

At the adolescent level it would be considered best to have a wide covering of the field of education. Maritain says:

In a social order fitted to the common dignity of man, college education should be given to all, so as to complete the preparation of the youth before he enters the state of manhood.²

Maritain would term college education as that given to the youth from the age of sixteen to nineteen. This would correspond to the high school level in our existing educational framework. He would defer specialization until a later stage in the educational process.

To introduce specialization at this sphere is to do violence to the world of youth. As a matter of fact, a young man will choose his specialty for himself and progress all the more rapidly and perfectly in vocational, scientific, or technical training in proportion as his education has been liberal and universal. Youth has a right to education in the liberal arts, in order to be prepared for human work and for human leisure. But such education is killed by premature specialization.³

This view does not receive complete approval from those who defend the modern view of education. While Maritain holds the position that education has as its end the total development of the powers of man, with emphasis on the intellectual powers, such men as Judd feel that education is a preparation for the special manner in which man will spend his life working in society.

Judd says on this subject:

One mistake which has often been made in the dispute between the representatives of the new technical courses and the representatives of the traditional courses is that of assuming that traditional courses are different

¹Ibid. p. 63.

²Ibid. p. 64.

³Ibid. p. 64.

from technical courses which merely cultivate imitation and that these traditional courses always cultivate high types of intellectual ability. Not only have defenders of the traditional courses claimed that these courses are superior to all other means of training the mind, but they have insisted that all pupils ought to take the traditional courses if they are to be put in possession of the best that the race has produced in the course of its evolution.¹

Judd continues with the opinion that the so-called liberal courses were originally of the vocational type developed to satisfy the culture of ancient times. Cole, speaking of the trend in curriculum-making toward vocational training in secondary schools, explains this trend by saying:

As soon as high schools began to grow rapidly and to enroll students of widely varying interests, it became evident that what many pupils needed was vocational education. There have been enthusiasts who wanted to turn practically all higher education into vocational training.²

Certain writers make the point that there is and must be a place in education for both liberal and vocational education. Bernard Iddings Bell is one of these.

Much of the current argument between liberal educators and vocational educators seems artificial. Obviously everyone should both earn a living and live it once it has been earned: this is true whether his labor be in the field of thought or in more prosaic employments. The true aim of education must consist in teaching both how to do a reputable job and also how to be a human being and enjoy life. Whether in the secondary schools or in the colleges to which so many of their graduates go these days or in still later fields of mature activity, liberal education, which has to do with being, and vocational training, which has to do with doing, are properly not only inseparable but interdependent. One's vision of meaning is colored by the effectiveness of one's creative activity. Conversely, one's labors have meaning only to the extent that one comes to perceive their place in cosmic processes or, at least, their relationship to the ends that are essentially human. It is wicked to go in for the sort of liberal education which produces incompetent dreamers. It is equally wicked to rely on uninterpreted vocational training to turn out men and women of understanding and wisdom.³

¹C.H. Judd, Educational Psychology, p. 376.

²L. Cole, Psychology of Adolescence, p. 575.

³B.I. Bell, Crisis in Education, p. 49.

The need for liberal education in the democratic world is stated strongly by a committee of university professors in a publication entitled General Education in School and College. This report says:

A liberally-educated man demands freedom. "We call those studies liberal", wrote a Renaissance educator, "which are worthy of a free man"... and we might add today, of a free society. Education designed to free individual human beings from the limitations of ignorance, prejudice, and provincialism makes sense only in a free society; we mean one based on the belief that individual persons are ends in themselves, that men are responsible beings, equal in rights, and that government exists only to foster their freedom. When totalitarian dictatorship triumphs in the modern world, truly "liberal" education is the first object of attack, since it is one of the most obvious bulwarks against the brutalization and atomization of the individual. To put the matter another way, a democratic society can never develop if the individuals composing it are merely specialists with no significant knowledge or beliefs held in common. The only way to organize a society of pure experts who have little or nothing in common with each other is through a dictatorship. On the other hand, the ideal democratic society, if there were one, would see to it that its specialists were liberally-educated men. Liberal education and the democratic ideal are related to each other in a thousand ways. It is not too much to say that they stand and fall together.¹

The need of liberal education in the present educational process is stressed by many. It is clearly understood that technical and vocational education have a most important place in the present environment. Maritain holds that specialization should come after the fundamentals of liberal education have been received. Others hold the same view. Dr. Malcolm Wallace writes:

Now it is difficult to convert an acquaintance with the humanities into higher earning power. They are not "goods" to increase our technical or professional efficiency; like good health, they are their own justification. They do not make better engineers or doctors or plumbers; they merely make better and happier men who go about their business of living more intelligently. It would not be necessary to labor the point were it not for the general assumption that education is an instrument. Even the speaking or writing of good English has been commended on the ground that professional or business efficiency is increased thereby. We find it difficult to believe in tastes or interests or skills merely because they make us happier, more satisfied, more conscious of living abundantly. The heresy, of course, is based on the assumption that our human satisfaction depends on

¹General Education in School and College, A Committee Report of the Faculties of Andover, Exeter, Lawrenceville, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 20.

the possession of power, of wealth, not as instruments but as ultimates.¹

The same theme is dealt with by Sir Richard Livingstone, who says:

We live in a world where our power gives us the chance of doing unlimited harm; and we need an education which teaches us not merely how to use that power but how to use it well. To build up in every man and woman a solid core of spiritual life, which will resist the attrition of everyday existence in our mechanized world - that is the most difficult and important task of school and university. Barbarian tribes destroyed the Roman Empire. There are no such tribes to destroy modern civilization from outside. The barbarians are ourselves. The real modern problem is to humanize man, to show him the spiritual ideals without which neither happiness nor success are genuine or permanent, to produce beings who will know not merely how to split atoms but how to use their powers for good. Such knowledge is not to be had from the social or physical sciences.²

This leads us to the question of how these views are to be put into operation. The device by which this is done is the curriculum, and on this Maritain has very definite views. He would have a different division of the school life from that which is prevalent in the western world at the present time. He outlines his division in a footnote in his book, Education at the Crossroads, where he says:

The general plan which I have in mind and which forms the background of my present considerations divides the main educational periods as follows: 1. The rudiments (or elementary education): 7 years, divided into 4 years of initial elementary education (age six to nine) and 3 years of complementary elementary education (age: ten to twelve). ll. The humanities: 7 years, divided into 3 years of secondary education of high school (age: thirteen to fifteen) and 4 years of college education (age: sixteen to nineteen). lll. Advanced studies, comprising the university and higher specialized learning.³

The curriculum for the years of secondary education would differ from that now accepted in the western schools. Since Maritain is in the classical

¹Malcolm W. Wallace, The Humanities. Royal Commission Studies. A Selection of Essays prepared for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences. (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1951), p. 105.

²Sir Richard Livingstone, Some Tasks for Education (London: Oxford University Press, 1946) p. 14.

³J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, footnote, p. 67.

tradition, he concentrates on that branch of study during these all-important years. He sets out the particulars of his curriculum as follows:

Supposing that the period of the humanities were to last seven years, so that secondary education, which forms the transition between the period of rudiments and the college, and whose importance is therefore crucial, would comprise three years (from thirteen to fifteen), we might order these three years as follows:

The year of Languages, comprising: first, foreign languages, studied in connection with the national language; second, comparative grammar and the art of expression; third, national history, geography, and natural history (especially elementary astronomy and geology). The year of Grammar, comprising: first, grammar, especially comparative grammar and philology; second, foreign languages and the art of expression; third, national history, geography, natural history (especially botany).

The year of History and Expression, comprising: first, national history, history of civilization, the art of expression; second, foreign languages; third, comparative grammar and philology, geography, natural history (especially zoology).¹

One of the most striking features of the secondary school curriculum outlined by Maritain is the total lack of mathematics in the preparatory years. Though he places this science in the following years of undergraduate study, it seems odd that the elementary grounding in this science should be left to the later stages of the educational course. Indeed, the delay in starting this study seems to ignore one of his basic principles, since mathematics has an appeal to the very qualities which he cites as proper to the age of youth, wonder and the search for truth. On this subject, the committee report known as General Education in School and College, has this to say:

Mathematics is the rigorous application of notions that are vaguely apparent even to the nonmathematical; its wonder lies in its demonstration of the extraordinary power which comes from thinking closely and connectedly. It is not remarkable that an apple drops with growing speed from tree to ground, but what Newton did to this idea is one of the heroic advances of the human mind. The means by which he did it are not easily understood; the power of abstract thinking is matched by its difficulties. This is true for all the basic ideas of mathematics, yet it is just these basic ideas that are of the greatest value to the student.²

¹Ibid. p. 66.

²General Education in School and College, p. 53.

Maritain feels that the preliminary training of the first section of the secondary education will prepare the student for the second part, the universe of the liberal arts. This would comprise four years, divided into the following sections:

The year of Mathematics and Poetry, comprising first mathematics and literature and poetry; second logic; third, foreign languages, and the history of civilization.

The year of Natural Sciences and Fine Arts, comprising; first, physics and natural science; second, fine arts, mathematics, literature and poetry; third, history of the sciences.

The year of Philosophy comprising: first, philosophy, that is to say, metaphysics and philosophy of nature, theory of knowledge, psychology; second, physics and natural science; third, mathematics, literature and poetry, fine arts.

The year of Ethical and Political Philosophy, comprising: first, ethics, political and social philosophy; second, physics and natural science; third, mathematics, literature and poetry, fine arts, history of civilization and history of the sciences.¹

Maritain would have the sciences taught during this period as an intellectual exercise rather than as a source of practical application. He says on this point:

... physics and natural science must be considered as one of the chief branches of liberal arts. They are mainly concerned with the mathematical reading of natural phenomena, and insure in this way the domination of the human spirit over the world of matter, not in terms of ontological causes but rather in terms of number and measurement.... Physics and natural science, if they are taught not only for the sake of practical applications but essentially for the sake of knowledge, with reference to the specific epistemological approach they involve and in close connection with the history of the sciences and the history of civilization, provide man with a vision of the universe and an understanding of scientific truth and a sense of the sacred, exacting, unbending objectivity of the humblest truth, which play an essential part in the liberation of the mind and in liberal education. Physics should be taught and revered as a liberal art of the first rank, like poetry, and probably more important than even mathematics.²

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 67.

²Ibid. p. 69.

Maritain does not stress the classical languages in his outline. He deliberately omits them, placing them in the class of specialized studies, to be undertaken only for some definite purpose. He explains this attitude by saying:

Our curriculum, besides, does not mention either Latin or Greek; in my opinion, they would represent chiefly a waste of time for the many destined to forget them; Latin, Greek, and Hebrew (or at least one of these three root-languages of our civilization) should be learned later on - much more rapidly and fruitfully - by graduate students in languages, literature, history or philosophy.¹

During the study of the humanities the student will gain a useful knowledge of the inner mechanisms of language, one practical result to be achieved by the study of the classics. Foreign language study offers a means of mastery over the national language, while the study of great books gives the best learning in literature. The study of these great books should be from the original texts since it is from these texts that the deep thought of the author is obtained. Commenting on this method of studying classical literature, Maritain says:

One cannot emphasize too much the educational role of great books. Yet this role does not only consist in sharpening the intellectual power of the youth; they are not only like a large bone with which a puppy struggles so that his teeth may grow sharper. To bring the metaphor to completion, it should be added that this large bone is a marrow-bone, and that not only do the puppy's teeth have to grow sharper, but his living substance also has to feed itself on the valuable marrow. It is doubtless not a question for the young student of "mastering" the great books, but of discovering and being quickened and delighted by the truth and beauty they convey - and, if they convey errors too, of discerning and judging the latter, however awkward and imperfect this process may be at first. The intellect's teeth are not really sharpened if they are not able to separate the true from the false. That is why the great books should not be too many in number, and their reading should be accompanied by enlightenment about their historical context and by courses on the subject matter.²

¹Ibid. p. 69.

²Ibid. p. 70.

Maritain states definitely that education which omits the study of philosophy lacks the crowning glory of the finished edifice. He would make this study a necessary part of the educational process. He says:

... education deals ultimately with the great achievements of the human mind; and without knowing philosophy and the achievements of the great thinkers it is utterly impossible for us to understand anything of the development of mankind, civilization, culture, and science.¹

He sees the difficulty of teaching and studying philosophy since modern philosophers hold divergent views on the basic principles which are the starting points of the various systems. This difficulty can be overcome, according to Maritain, when the stress is laid on the basic truth which underlies each system and when consideration is taken of the fact that the purpose of philosophical courses is to cause the student to think, rather than to accept the system of the teacher without critical analysis of the system. Maritain says on this point:

The solution of this problem may take two forms. First, there is a common, though unformulated, heritage of philosophical wisdom which passes through any real teaching of philosophy, whatever may be the system of the teacher. Reading Plato is ever a blessing, even if you disagree with the tenets of Platonism. Second, teachers in philosophy are not teaching to be believed but in order to awaken reason; and the students in philosophy owe it to their teacher to free themselves from him.²

Maritain also considers philosophy without theology to be incomplete. According to him, the western culture in which our educational frame is set needs an understanding of theological problems to be properly understood.

Thus the considerations I have laid down regarding philosophy are still truer of theology. Nobody can do without theology, at least a concealed and unconscious theology, and the best way of avoiding the inconveniences of an insinuated theology is to deal with theology that is consciously aware of itself. And liberal education cannot complete its task without knowledge of the specific realm and the concerns of theological wisdom.³

¹Ibid. p. 72.

²Ibid. p. 72.

³Ibid. p. 74.

As with philosophy, the question of teaching courses in a subject having so many different views of fundamental doctrine poses a problem. Maritain, who advises the giving of such courses in the last year of the study of humanities, lays down certain guiding principles:

The practical aspect of this question is of no difficulty for denominational colleges. With regard to nondenominational colleges, the practical solution would depend on the recognition of the pluralist principle in such matters. Theological teaching would be given, according to the diversity of creeds, by professors belonging to the main religious denominations, each one addressing the students of his own denomination. And of course, those students who nurture a bias against theology would be released from attending these courses and allowed to remain incomplete in wisdom at their own pleasure.¹

In the process of education, Maritain considers the perfection of learning to take place in the university. Here the training and intellectual development, undertaken and pursued in the years of youthful study, would reach its highest state. For Maritain, the aim of a university is as follows:

If, according to the European habit, we reserve the name university for higher learning in advanced and graduate studies, we might say that the aim of the university is to achieve the formation and equipment of the youth in regard to the strength and maturity of judgment and the intellectual virtues.²

The scope of the university in modern times should be broad enough to satisfy the demands of modern democratic civilization. Differing from the original idea of the university as modern life differs from that of the Middle Ages, departments and divisions of its teaching would embrace all the arts and sciences making up the body of knowledge of the modern day. Maritain writes on this point:

And in our age, when such teaching does not deal, as in the Middle Ages, with the formation of an intellectual leadership essentially consisting of clerics, nor, as in the following centuries, with the formation of the potential members of the ruling classes, but deals, according to a more democratic pattern, with the formation of a much larger and more diversified mass of outstanding citizens of all ranks in the nation, it is suitable that

¹Ibid. p. 75.

²Ibid. p. 76.

actually all the arts and sciences, even those which concern the management of common life and the application of the human mind to matters of practical utility, should be embraced by the typical modern university.¹

Maritain would divide the teaching of the university into three orders, graded from the study of the useful arts and applied sciences to the realm of speculative sciences and fine arts. The first of these orders would be:

... concerned with the realm of useful arts and applied sciences in the broadest sense of these words, and with advanced studies in technical training, engineering, administrative sciences, arts and crafts, agriculture, mining, applied chemistry, statistics, commerce, finance, and so on.²

The second would be concerned with the realm of those practical sciences which relate to man himself and to human life. Such sciences would include medicine and its allied subjects on the one hand, and on the other such fields as law, politics, education and so on.

The third order would be concerned with the speculative sciences and fine arts, a knowledge which liberates the mind by truth or beauty. Of this order, Maritain writes:

At this point we find the immense chorus of the free workings of the spirit, mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, geology, biology, anthropology, psychology, pre-history, archeology, history, ancient and modern literature and languages, philology, music, fine arts and so on. That is the very core of the life of the university and the very treasure of the civilized heritage.³

For the perfection of the highest education Maritain would have a fourth order, of which he writes:

And this third order is to culminate in a fourth one, which is the highest animating center in the architecture of teaching, and which deals with those sciences that are also wisdom because they are universal by virtue of their very object and of their very essence: the philosophy of

¹Ibid. p. 76.

²Ibid. p. 77.

³Ibid. p. 78.

nature, metaphysics, and the theory of knowledge, ethical philosophy, social and political philosophy, the philosophy of culture and of history, theology and the history of religions.¹

Maritain feels that the function of the university would not be perfectly carried out if there were not an opportunity for the study of teachings and findings of theology. Even for those students who do not accept the teachings of theology as true, he feels that there is great benefit in coming in contact with them since from these teachings they will receive breadth of vision and acquaintance with the roots of our culture and civilization. Maritain feels that, in the universities which are nondenominational, the various schools of theology should be represented impartially, open to all the students and having as their purpose, not the formation of clerics, but the enlightenment of laymen in the problems and findings of these creeds.

¹Ibid. p. 78.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEMS OF PRESENT-DAY EDUCATION

Maritain sees the recent world struggle of the nations as the end of an era of individualism in thought, industry and statesmanship. This stressing of the individual in industry by the "laissez faire" policy, in thought by the angelism of Descartes, and in statesmanship by the exaggeration of nationalism, reached its climax in the two world struggles through which the nations have passed in the last two generations.

Maritain feels that man must reconsider the effect of this individuality on mankind, and reshape his thought to avoid a repetition of the evils which have come from it. He writes of this:

If mankind overcomes the terrible threats of slavery and dehumanization which it faces today, it will thirst for a new humanism, and be eager to rediscover the integrity of man, and to avoid the cleavages from which the preceding age suffered so much.¹

Maritain is not alone among those who write on education in seeing dangers in the future as well as certain lacks in the past. R.M. Saunders, writing in the publication, Education for Tomorrow, says:

Our ancestors had their roots. They knew what they believed. They were in touch, intimate touch with the sources of spiritual capital. Too many of us are rootless. We have lost touch with the spiritual sources of our way of life. We do not know what we believe. We drift in a sea of chaos. Thoughtful people wonder how many tests such as we have undergone, we can survive. To them our victory is not a triumph barely won, but a catastrophe barely averted.²

¹Ibid. p. 88.

²Richard M. Saunders, Education for Tomorrow, a Series of Lectures organized by the committee representing the Teaching Staff of the University of Toronto (Toronto: The University Press, 1946), p. X.

This new humanism of which Maritain speaks will demand a new education, or, at least, a new outlook on education, so as to bring about in society an attitude of mind which will make this new humanism known and desirable.

Bourgeois individualism is done for. What will assume full importance for the man of tomorrow are the vital connections of man with society, that is, not only the social environment but also common work and common good.¹

Maritain sees two possible replacements for the individualism of the bourgeois era, either totalitarianism or regimentation of the beehive type, or a civilization founded on true humanism. He writes:

The problem is to replace the individualism of the bourgeois era not by totalitarianism or the sheer collectivism of the beehive but by a personalistic and communal civilization, grounded on human rights and satisfying the social aspirations and the needs of man.²

Maritain writes of education as a process which must look to the future, must anticipate the needs of the future and prepare men for these needs by training them to fulfil these needs before they become of immediate necessity. The time lag between the felt need of the culture and the preparation for that felt need should be as short as possible. This lag is overcome by the advance thinking of those in control of education. The work of the educator of today is to lay the foundation for the needs of tomorrow by re-directing the thought of man to the new humanism of which Maritain has made mention.

Education must remove the rift between the social claim and the individual claim within man himself. It must therefore develop both the sense of freedom and the sense of responsibility, human rights and human obligations, the courage to take risks and exert authority for the general welfare and the respect for the humanity of each individual person.³

In thus outlining the work of education, Maritain again asserts his belief that man is first a person, possessing an intelligence and will and thus having the right to the possession of truth and good; and second, man is a member of society the good of which is common to all its members.

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 89.

²Ibid. p. 89.

³Ibid. p. 89.

This concept of the role of persons in society is a basic one with Maritain who is deeply concerned with the nature and role of the person in human life and equally concerned with the role of the person in society. He writes, "To state it rigorously, the person cannot be alone. It wants to tell what it knows, and it wants to tell what it is - to whom, if not to other people?"¹ He speaks of Rousseau's statement that the breath of man is deadly to man, and Seneca's remark that every time that he has been among men he has returned a diminished man, and says of these views:

All that is true - and yet by a fundamental paradox we cannot be men without going among men, we cannot make life and activity burgeon within us without breathing in common with our fellow-men. Thus society is born, as something required by nature, and (because this nature is human nature) as something accomplished through a work of reason and will, and freely consented to. Man is a political animal, which means that the human person craves political life, communal life, not only with regard to the family community, but with regard to the civil community. And the commonwealth, in so far as it deserves the name, is a society of human persons.²

It is from this natural condition of man, the possession of intelligence and will, that the freedom which is essential for the full life of man comes, and with it the search for and attraction to the good, taking man out of himself and expressing the love for others which is the basis for the recognition of the dignity of his fellow-men.

The question of leisure in the post-war world is one which commands attention on the part of Maritain. In the modern world shorter working hours, labor-saving devices and lessened demands on the energy of the people have left both time and energy at the disposal of the people. Maritain thinks that a liberal education is of use in making provision for the enjoyable spending of this time and energy. He writes:

¹J. Maritain, The Rights of Man and Natural Law, p. 6.

²Ibid. p. 6.

The problem of human leisure, which mechanical and social progress had made important before the war, is bound to become a particularly crucial problem in the world of tomorrow. Physical and mental relaxation, plays, movies, games, are good and necessary. Only that leisure however is suitable to what is most human in man, and is of greater worth than work itself, which consists of an expansion of our inner activities in enjoying the fruits of knowledge and beauty. Liberal education enables man to do so. Here we see one of the reasons why liberal education should be extended to all.¹

This problem of leisure has attracted the attention of others interested in the work of education in the post-war world. It is considered as a major problem by Herbert Read, who, in his book, Education for Peace, says:

But when, as nowadays, we speak of the problem of leisure, we are not thinking of securing time or opportunity to do something: we have time on our hands, and the problem is how to fill it. Leisure no longer signifies a space with some difficulty secured against the pressure of events: rather it signifies a pervasive emptiness for which we must invent occupations. Leisure is a vacuum, a desperate state of vacancy - a vacancy of mind and body. It has been handed over to the sociologists and the psychologists: to such specialists it is more than a problem - it is a disease.²

Read's judgment on the nature of leisure in the present world may be considered a harsh one, but the recognition of the problem places some onus on the educators to find a solution for it, and Maritain would have it consist in so enriching the intellectual powers of the mind as to be a source of pleasure in the pursuit of intellectual recreation. This seems to be the idea of the Report of the Harvard Committee when dealing with the value in general of liberal education.

The adult who rereads his great authors realizes how much he had missed of their meaning when he read them in school or college. Now, his reading is more rewarding because his range of experience is greater.³

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 89.

²Herbert Read, Education for Peace (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 44.

³General Education in a Free Society. Report of the Harvard Committee. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945), p. 70.

This quotation would seem to indicate something of the same idea as found in Maritain, that liberal education would give food for profitable intellectual exercise during leisure time.

Maritain feels that the education of tomorrow must stress the social obligations of each member of society. Effort must be made to inculcate in the youth of the time a realization of the debt each one owes society as well as an understanding of the responsibilities arising from membership in society. Maritain writes thus:

The education of tomorrow must provide the common man with the means for his personal fulfillment, not only with regard to his labor but also with regard to his social and political activities in the civil commonwealth, and to the activities of his leisure hours.¹

Maritain has been discussing the general trend of the education of tomorrow. He now discusses individual tasks which are incumbent on that education. He sees education extended into fields hitherto not considered proper to it. This extension must be carried on with due caution and regard for certain inherent dangers. He writes:

Education has its own essence and its own aims. This essence and these essential aims, which deal with the formation of man and the inner liberation of the human person, must be preserved, whatever the superimposed burdens may be. It is not a question of refusing the latter. But if they were taken up in the wrong way, so as to warp the essential human values of education; or if the school, conceived according to some totalitarian pattern as an organ of the political state, were to replace the free and normal agencies provided by nature and God for the upbringing of man, then the common good, for the sake of which the superadded burdens must be assumed, would not be ensured, but betrayed.²

Maritain advocates a state authority under which schools would be granted academic freedom, supervised by the state within the structure of the school associations sanctioned by law. Any state interference with the organization or

¹ J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 90/.

² Ibid. p. 91.

the curriculum of these schools would be based on the free association agreements concluded between the state and representatives of the autonomous unions of the schools. He writes of this:

Here we face again the importance of the pluralist principle, which grants to the manifold groups arising from free association the greatest autonomy, and bases the state's superior authority on the recognition of the rights of these groups. As concerns the educational system, the pluralist principle implies basically academic freedom. Not only does it stress the right to found schools, which is open to everyone qualified and complying with the laws of the state. It also demands that diverse teaching institutions be free to join with each other in several unions or organizations which would be prevented by law from encroaching upon the basic liberties of their members, but could establish general regulations valid inside each union. It is by the agreements concluded between these unions (including the unions of schools and colleges supported by the state) that any justifiable intervention of the state in educational matters might take place.¹

Maritain's concern for the freedom of the schools from state interference arises from the domination of education in Europe by the political parties in the dictator states. On this side of the Atlantic ocean, the question concerns the financial aid given to schools by the central government. James B. Conant has expressed some basic ideas on this subject as they apply in the United States. In his book, Education in a Divided World, he writes:

Let us start with the elementary and secondary schools. These institutions are firmly rooted historically in the local community. In spite of a considerable diversity in the development of universal education in the different states, I think it safe to say that the doctrine of local control of the school is one of the beliefs ingrained in the American mind.²

Conant goes on to say, however, that this desire to have the schools controlled locally is not the true state of educational policy. He continues:

The constitutional unit on matters of education, however, is not the town or city, but the state.³

¹Ibid. p. 92.

²James B. Conant, Education in a Divided World (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 183.

³Ibid. p. 194.

Though the root of the question in this instance is finance, both Conant and Maritain see a danger of interference by the state in matters of curriculum and organization of the schools. The danger would be modified and the role of the state in education would be supervised by parents' associations which would counteract any attempt on the part of the state to assume control beyond its rights. Maritain writes on this point:

An important role should be granted to the parents' associations, which would make their desires heard by the educational body and whose claims could counterbalance the demands of the state.¹

Since every department of the social order would have its share in the work of education, Maritain has a place for those organizations which represent the working class. He says:

The role of labor unions and other great economic or cultural organizations which might possibly become the founders and trustees of a number of privately endowed teaching institutions, should also be taken into consideration.²

Thus Maritain sees the education of tomorrow to be a social function of the state, the liberating of the free spirit of man in all walks of life, and a joint undertaking of all those who make up the political society of free men.

One of the causes of the disruption of modern life appears to Maritain to be the decay of morality in the modern world. This decay, he considers, must be combatted by the education of tomorrow. One of the special tasks of the school is to assure proper order and discipline, not only in the school itself, but also in the social community for the good of which the educative process is being carried on. He writes of this:

The task of moral re-education is really a matter of public emergency. Every serious observer recognizes the fact that children have not only to be trained in proper conduct, law observance, and politeness, but that this very training remains deficient and precarious if there is no genuine inter-

1J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 93.

2Ibid. p. 93.

nal formation. That the teachers in public schools may not face unruliness and violence, moral authority must be recognized; and there must be a serious teaching of moral principles, I mean as grounded on truth rather than as suitable to social convenience.¹

The teaching of such moral principles presents a difficult task in countries where religious freedom allows a choice of dogma. Maritain claims that, in the teaching of morality, the modern educator is faced with the large number of parents who are opposed to any religious teaching for their children. This opposition must be taken into consideration since the parents as a group have great influence in the shaping of curriculum. This same reluctance to commit the school to a pre-determined dogma is expressed by Conant, who says:

A wide diversity of beliefs and the tolerance of this diversity have constituted the bedrock of our national unity. They must continue to be the foundation for the peaceful growth of this republic.²

On the other hand, the school owes a debt of moral training to the society which it serves, one which must be paid in one form or another. It is but one of the many agencies in the moral training of the citizens, but an important one. In the work, General Education in a Free Society, we read, "Clearly we have a right to expect the school to be engaged directly in moral education."³ The youth of Canada expressed their opinion on the need of moral training in the schools. In a work called Youth Speaks Its Mind, we read:

They also expressed a need for greater command of good English, for moral guidance and religious training, for a philosophy of life and character development, training for leadership and help in learning "how to take hold of a proposal and carry it through."⁴

¹Ibid. p. 93.

²J.B. Conant, Education in a Divided World, p. 96.

³General Education in a Free Society, p. 72.

⁴Blodwen Davies, Youth Speaks Its Mind (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1948), p. 105.

Maritain speaks of the necessity of reviving the moral power of reason. There appears to be a great decline in ethical reasoning though this decline is more apparent at the present time in the ideas than in the actions of the people. This may result from lack of direction on the part of the teachers in the schools who themselves are the products of an education which has failed to direct their reason in the proper ethical channels. He writes of this:

To such a disease of human intelligence and conscience, special remedies should be given, not only through a badly needed revival of religious faith but also through a revival of the moral power of reason. Accordingly, if teachers may be found whose reason is healthier than that of their students, special teaching should be provided, in schools and colleges, for the principles of natural morality.¹

The exercise of natural morality feels more at home in the field of temporal activities which include such things as political, civic and social morality. These temporal activities should be stressed in the school so as to inculcate in the students the ethical approach to these sciences.

The need for moral teaching in the modern world has been expressed by Sir Josiah Stamp in his book, We Live and Learn, where he writes:

It is not to be wondered that young people are perplexed when the adult world is so divided in its opinions. Having lost tradition and authority as an adequate basis for our judgment of right and wrong, and conscience having no education, we have found no adequate substitute.²

The same writer, considering the need of religious education in the schools vital to the life of the nation, speaks of the duty of the schools in this regard in this way:

The responsibility for the religious outlook in education is thus thrown on the educationist and the teacher to a unique degree. He cannot, in this particular, say that the business man can get what he wants by asking for it.

¹J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 94.

²Sir Josiah Stamp, We Live and Learn (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited. 1938), p. 183.

When we proceed from business to the State or to those who directly control social policy, the incidence of the responsibility is still unchanged. The educationist cannot divest himself of it by saying that he is there as a mere servant to supply according to other people's specifications and that he has no rights or responsibilities of his own.¹

Catholic authorities on education take a firm stand on the question of religious education in the schools. They assert that religious education is necessary for the individual in his personal life as well as in his social life as a member of the community. On the question of the role of the school in preserving the freedoms of democracy, Redden and Ryan state:

The question may well be asked, therefore, "What kind of world is needed in order that these freedoms may function effectively?".... That kind of world ought to include, among other things, the recognition of individual freedom as a gift of God; respect for the inalienable rights of the individual; knowledge of man's brotherhood and spiritual equality; and the acceptance of absolute, universal, moral principles governing all aspects of life. Education, then, should seek to inculcate in the individual the foregoing fundamental truths if it is to effect desirable changes in the individual and, consequently, in the social order.²

There are many who do not agree that religious education lies within the scope of the school. Ernest Green, in his work, Education for a New Society, writes:

Now the Free Churches and the Anglican Church have reached a general agreement on the basis of religious teaching; and, though some Anglicans still clamour for denominational instruction, others - more enlightened, it may be suggested - are prepared to accept the position long since taken up by their new allies, and leave all sectarian teaching to the Church and the Sunday School.³

Because of this feeling on the part of many authorities against dogmatic religious instruction in the schools, Maritain feels that the schools of to-

¹Ibid. p. 92.

²John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, Freedom through Education (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1944), p. 187.

³Ernest Green, Education for a New Society (London: G. Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1943), p. 135.

morrow must concentrate on the teaching of natural morality in the fields of political life and civilization. He writes:

So the teaching of natural morality will naturally tend to lay stress on what may be called the ethics of political life and of civilization. Which is all to the good (for here it enjoys its maximum strength and practical truth) provided that it resist the temptation of neglecting or disparaging personal morality, which is the root of all morality. Above all it should resist the temptation of warping and perverting all its work by making itself a tool of the state to shape youth according to the collective pattern supposedly needed by the pride, greed, or myths of the earthly community.¹

Maritain asserts that the knowledge of the principles of morality is not enough to insure moral action by the individual. The vital faculty involved in action is not the intellect but the will, and so it is necessary to inculcate in the subject rectitude of will which results in a movement away from self and towards the good that it perceives in the moral act. He writes in this regard:

Now since we are dealing with morality and moral teaching, we must not overlook the practical truth which is of the greatest moment in this regard: as to the actual uprightness of the will and human conduct, knowledge and sound teaching are necessary but are surely not enough. In order for us rightly to judge what to do in a particular case, our reason itself depends on the uprightness of our will, and on the decisive movement of our very freedom.²

The place of the will in the act of moral freedom is expressed by Maritain more fully in his work, Freedom in the Modern World, where he writes:

St. Thomas does not conceive Free Will as a sort of divinity of the noumenal order that lives within us and that nothing can affect. He knows that our free will is immersed in a world of affectivity, of instinct, of passion, of sensitive and spiritual desire. Our will is solicited on every side; it is weak; it loves and desires all sorts of "goods" in its own despite. But when our intellect intervenes to deliberate our action it awakens the infinite capacity for love of which we have been speaking; to will and to love this or that good to the point at which it determines my act, the act of my human personality, this is

¹ J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 95.

² Ibid. p. 95.

proper to the free action of my will, for it depends on a practical judgment of my intellect which my will alone is able to control.¹

The education of the will away from egoism and towards an outer good is given first in the security and love of the family, where the child first experiences parental and brotherly love. Later, this education is continued in the school where he learns to give of what he has for the benefit of his fellows.

And it is in the nature of things that the vitality and virtue of love develop first in the family. Not only the examples of the parents, and the rules of conduct which they inculcate, and the religious habits and inspirations which they further, and the memories of their own lineage which they convey, in short the educational work which they directly perform, but also, in a more general way, the common experiences and common trials, endeavors, sufferings, and hopes, and the daily labor of family life, and the daily love which grows up in the midst of cuffs and kisses, constitute the normal fabric where the feelings and the will of the child are naturally shaped.²

The importance of the home as a basic educational unit is stressed by others in the field of education. Educational psychologists are concerned with such questions as the influence of members of the family on each other, the size of families, and the proper climate within the family group. Cole says:

The child who is fortunate enough to grow up in a "complete" family circle has the best possible chance of feeling secure and of developing a normal personality. If any member of the family is missing, the home environment is in some degree defective, and the child may suffer in consequence.³

The educational function of the home is stressed by Iddings Bell, who writes:

¹J. Maritain, Freedom in the Modern World, Trans. Richard O'Sullivan, (London: Sheed & Ward, 1935), p. 8.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 96.

³L. Cole, Psychology of Adolescence, p. 300.

Manners, morals, religion have always been taught by parents in the home; to teach them otherwise is to teach them awkwardly and badly. Because they are the indispensable disciplines which make for character, in which human beings must become and remain reasonably adept, and because such is the function of the home, parents cannot abdicate the authority and responsibility to teach them except at the cost of contributing to social disruption.¹

Maritain stresses the importance of home education as a foundation for the good habits of later life. He writes:

Over and above all, family love and brotherly love create in the heart of the child that hidden recess of tenderness and repose the memory of which man so badly needs, and in which, perhaps after years of bitterness, he will immerse² himself anew each time a natural trend to goodness and peace awakens in him.

Maritain now considers the question of the needs of the state and the political commonwealth in the new world which follows the War. Here he finds another superadded task for education. From the freedom, rights, and autonomy which will come to the educational body and to the individual, will come responsibilities and moral obligations as their correlatives. These duties and responsibilities will in no way detract from the freedom of the political body or the individual. Maritain states this clearly when he writes:

In a human commonwealth, freedom and authority are as necessary for one another, by virtue of the nature of things, as their occasional conflicts are inevitable in actual fact. Political authority, that right to direct and to be obeyed for the sake of the general welfare,³ political authority is not opposed to human freedom, but required by it.

He has made his thinking on this subject clear in another of his works, The Rights of Man and Natural Law, when he says:

A second characteristic relates to authority in society. The common good is the foundation of authority; for indeed leading a community of human persons towards their common good, towards the good of the whole as such, requires that certain individuals be charged with this guidance, and

¹B.I. Bell, Crisis in Education, p. 84.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 97.

³Ibid. p. 98.

that the directions which they determine, the decisions which they make to this end, be followed or obeyed by the other members of the community.¹

The free acceptance of authority in the democratic state is closely connected with education in the state. The ultimate goal of all the actions of the state is the common good. Education has the same end, the common good. Maritain says of the role of education in the free commonwealth:

The educational body, to the very extent that it is free and autonomous, is bound in conscience to the common good. To the very extent that it is entrusted with an all-important function in the common good, it is bound in conscience to feel responsible toward the entire community, and to take into consideration the requirements of the general welfare.²

This interest in the common good and the role that education plays in bringing this good to reality, is also expressed by E. Green, who says:

... the new society will have to face fundamental problems just as the old one had to face them, with the difference - that while today social initiative and action depends upon a small minority of the people who have had the good fortune to be equipped for the task - or who have struggled against all odds to equip themselves, equality of educational opportunity and a conception of the values in the content of education suited to a new society, will produce men and women educated for the responsibility and capable of living the way of life which makes democracy a reality.³

Maritain points out that there is a responsibility on the political authority to see to it that education is unhampered in the carrying out of the task of promoting the common good. He writes of this:

Political authority, in the broad sense in which I use the word, has not only to protect the freedom of teaching but also to guide it toward the good of the whole, as far as a matter essential to the very life of the whole is involved.⁴

The danger exists that the state may make use of education to promote its particular political doctrine, overlooking or ignoring the basic aim of education and the

¹J. Maritain, The Rights of Man and Natural Law, p. 9.

²J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 98.

³E. Green, Education for a New Society, p. 143.

⁴J. Maritain, Education at the Crossroads, p. 99.

proper function of political authority. Maritain warns against this in the words:

Indeed, the time of anarchical freedom, which is but a false freedom is gone. The crucial point is to pass on to an age, not of servitude, but of real and organic freedom. As concerns education, this is not the moment to accept any philosophy which would warp its true essence, but rather to affirm and maintain this essence more than ever. I am afraid the new insistence on authority, therefore, if it departs from the unchangeable lines of the education of man, may perhaps deviate toward rather despotical educational philosophies.¹

The possibility of the political power making use of education to further its aims in the political field does not seem to Maritain to be too far-fetched. He speaks of certain writers who look to education to produce a type of person apparently approved by the political tenets of the time. Maritain feels that this is outside the scope of education. He says:

The state would summon education to make up for all that is lacking in the surrounding order in the matter of common political inspiration, stable customs, moral unity and unanimity, it would urge education to perform an immediate political task and, in order to compensate for all the deficiencies in civil society, to turn out in a hurry the type fitted to the immediate needs of the political power. Accordingly education would become a function directly and uniquely dependent on the management of the state, and the educational body an organ of state machinery. As a result of the extraneous and unnatural burden imposed upon education, and of the subsequent annexation of the educational tasks by the state, both the essence and freedom of education would be ruined.²

Maritain feels that the natural force of education, allowed to function without interference from the state, will achieve the ends of a democratic state. He foresees a new dynamic freedom in the education of the future which, by its very nature will counteract the forces opposed to the ideals of democracy.

The freedom enjoyed by education, therefore, will not be a quiet and easy-going, peacefully expanding freedom, but a tense and fighting one. Yet while changing its mood and taking on a new and more stringent style, it can and must remain freedom. We may be sure that the educational system will not need any obtrusive pressure of the state in order to help the effort of the body politic toward moral unity.³

¹Ibid. p. 99.

²Ibid. p. 100.

³Ibid. p. 102.

Maritain points out that the democratic states are aware of their past failure to inculcate the fundamental principles of democracy in their citizens. This failure, he claims, has been apparent in the teachings of the schools, where no great effort has been made to state clearly and attractively the foundations of the democratic ideal. In the future, a clear and exact enunciation of these principles, impressing them on the minds and wills of the pupils, will be the true method of overcoming the false teachings of those who advocate the overthrow of democracy. He says:

Democracies are aware today of their long carelessness in failing to defend and stress their own principles, their own intellectual and moral roots, in their own schools. They do not need to borrow totalitarian methods in order to remedy this lack. The great thing is that the democratic state itself have its own philosophy of life and society, and have faith in it.¹

Maritain foresees great changes in the education of tomorrow. In spite of the weaknesses of the past and with the experience gained from these weaknesses, he feels that correction will not be impossible. It is his opinion that the new education will be of immeasurable value to the democratic world. Of this, he says:

All the new conditions I have mentioned may be satisfied without altering the essence of education. At any rate this very essence must remain intact. For the sake of the new civilization we are fighting for, it is more than ever necessary that education be the education of man, and education for freedom, the formation of free men, for a free commonwealth. It is in education that freedom has its deepest human recess, where the reserves of freedom are kept alive.²

¹Ibid. p. 102.

²Ibid. p. 102.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The life of Jacques Maritain may be summed up as a continuous search for truth and for the meaning of reality. This search has been carried on for his own personal satisfaction and also that he might communicate the knowledge of the truth to others who are seeking it.

The refusal to be content with the explanations of reality accepted by his contemporaries might be taken as a sign of weakness and flight from the hard facts of life, but in the life of Maritain this idealism was a sign of moral strength, demanding personal and professional sacrifices in the attainment of the goal.

Maritain was intimately connected with those who, in his country, were dissatisfied with the findings of the age of reason, so brilliantly initiated by his countrymen, Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot. Men such as Beaudelaire, Psichari and Bloy had tried in various ways to find satisfaction of spirit in the material things of the world. Their failure to find this satisfaction spurred Maritain to seek in other directions.

It cannot be alleged that Maritain was out of touch with the hard reality of thought common to the scientifically minded men of his day, since he himself was trained as a scientist. It was the very failure of science to answer his questions on reality that forced him to seek the answers in the realm of philosophy, a rare approach for one steeped in the tenets of modern science. His scientific training, along with his deep desire to know what

lay behind the observable phenomena of the laboratory, made him subject his findings in the realm of truth to the light of logical criticism. Once he accepted his findings, he was determined to follow them to their conclusion without counting the cost.

His meeting with Raissa Oumansoff, his future wife, was a milestone in the search for truth, since she, too, had the same desire to know the reality which underlay the scientific materials with which she worked. Her failure to find this reality seemed a confirmation of his, and the conclusion they came to, that life without an adequate explanation was unbearable, led them to consider self-inflicted death preferable to life without meaning.

The contact, through friends, with the philosopher Henri Bergson, was the first ray of light to fall on this unhappy pair, the first promise that their search was not in vain. Even the faint prospect of attaining a knowledge of the absolute lightened their despair and set them on the path to the final solution of their difficulties.

It must be admitted that their solution does not commend itself to all persons of intelligence and good-will. For them, however, it was adequate and satisfying. It was, moreover, clearly not an emotional experience, but one of reason and logic.

For Maritain, the absolute led directly to God. In keeping with his character, he was ready to accept the hardships and trials which he knew would result from the pursuit of such an ideal. He foresaw misunderstandings with his colleagues in the academic world, with his relatives and those of his wife. These misunderstandings came quickly and were a source of deep sorrow to him and to his wife. After several years of unimportant positions as hack-writer and as teacher in small schools, his work in philosophy began to be recognized and his career from that time on was brilliant and successful.

Soon he began to find flaws in the teachings of Bergson and turned the more sharply to those of St. Thomas. In these teachings, he found the answers not only to his own personal problems but to those of many seekers similarly perplexed.

Now a fresh challenge faced him, that of spreading the philosophy of St. Thomas, not as a historical curiosity, but as a working philosophy for modern life. To do this, he had to show the reason for the loss of favor of this philosophy in the past. In reviewing the history of philosophical thought from the period of the Scholastics to the modern times, he considered that Descartes formally stated the doctrine which has had great influence on modern thought. This was the theory that man knows by innate ideas which do not come from immediate contact with existing reality outside the mind. This relegated the intellect to a role of introversion, to a consideration of ideas already existing within the mind of man and not, as St. Thomas teaches, to a role of extroversion, a consideration of the external truth of things. This explanation of the role of the intellect produced what Maritain calls the "angelism" of Descartes, leading men to neglect the truth of reality as not pertinent to the question of epistemology, and later as no longer valid in the consideration of reality. According to Maritain, this misdirection of thought led to the dismissal of absolute truth from consideration and later from very existence. For him, this was the explanation of his professors' inability to answer his questions about the nature of reality. He considered it a duty to rectify this erroneous attitude and to apply Thomistic principles to the problems of modern life.

Maritain maintains that the direct consequence of this angelism is the denial, or, at least, the neglect of the spiritual. This, to him, is a perversion of the true nature of being which can be corrected only by a proper under-

standing of the true nature of man. He showed, according to Thomistic principles, that man is spiritual as well as material. The spiritual part of man's being is the more important, especially in the attainment of truth, since it is through the operation of this spiritual part that contact is made with the reality of sensible things. The truths gathered from the nature of the sensible objects around man lead him to a knowledge of the absolute truth which is known as God.

This ability to know individual truths and to be led to the knowledge of the absolute truth seems to Maritain to be the reason for the dignity of man and the solid basis for the respect which is owed him by his fellow men. For this same reason, the rights guaranteed man by a democratic state have their origin in the very nature of man, a spiritual nature destined to the knowledge of the absolute truth. Maritain considered this a lesson from Thomism which would be of value to the modern world since it would give a philosophical explanation of democratic ways of life.

Maritain was led from his study of the nature of man to a consideration of the problems of education since they dealt with formation of man according to a definite ideal of what man should be.

Because Maritain accepts the Thomistic view of the end of life, he speaks with authority on this question. He considers the end of life to be closely connected with the nature of man and his personality. The spiritual nature of man is the key to the direction which must be given the education of man. The real purpose of man's existence is union with the ultimate truth, attained by a knowledge of the intermediate truths which exist in reality. This final end of man is the goal of education, which prepares him for it.

If one accepts Maritain's first principles, his theory of education seems logical, preparing man step by step for the final knowledge of the ul-

timate truth. Maritain is firmly convinced of the validity of the Thomistic doctrine, as are those who accept these principles. There are others in the field of educational philosophy who do not agree with him. Dewey, for example, would consider the very activity of man an end in itself, sufficient to justify and motivate man to act, without reference to a union with ultimate truth. This view seems to place the criterion of man's actions within himself, while Maritain would have it outside the individual. Dewey would stress the sensitive in man while Maritain would stress the role of the spiritual. This view leads Maritain to emphasize the personality of man which rests on the spiritual rather than the individuality which rests on the material. The development of the spiritual element of man will produce one who is aware of the destiny of mankind, and will develop the instrument by which this destiny can be achieved.

Maritain proceeds to consider the dynamics of education as producing the desired effect. He follows the Thomistic school in the explanation of the nature of knowledge, showing that the active intellect of the child is the important instrument in acquiring knowledge. It is this power of the intellect which is in contact with the reality of the object, though this contact is made through the senses. Thus the whole man is engaged in the process of learning, while the role of the teacher is one of encouragement and direction. This theory of learning is in harmony with that of the modern educational psychologists who stress the need of arousing the interest of the student so that he himself may carry out the task of learning. Maritain points out the need of the teacher in this process to create an atmosphere in which the learner can best operate, and speaks of the freedom of the learner as directed by discipline imposed by the teacher for the good of the learner.

Certain dispositions are to be fostered in the pupil, according to Maritain. These are love of truth, love of justice and love of the good. Along

with these dispositions, Maritain would have the teacher inculcate a feeling of happiness and an acceptance of the student's condition in life. A necessary task for the teacher is to develop in the child a habit of work, not necessarily for the particular piece of work but rather a sense of responsibility for the task undertaken and the need of carrying it through to a successful conclusion. In this he differs from Dewey who sees the responsibility arising from the very doing of the activity, while Maritain sees it existing in the nature of the person, arising from the spiritual desire for the perfection of the individual. This quality is stressed by many writers on educational subjects, though explained by them in different ways, some deploring the present-day attitude to work, others placing the cause of such an attitude in the modern home-life, the demands of society or the failing of the old-fashioned virtues.

Maritain also sees the necessity of fostering a feeling of co-operation among the students. This attitude meets the approval of modern authorities on education. While the more important agent in the process of learning is the pupil, Maritain does not underrate the place of the teacher in learning. He considers certain dispositions which must be used by the teacher as a guide to good work. It is necessary that the teacher keep in mind the liberation of the spiritual powers of the learner. In each individual spirit and matter, as it were, vie for the ascendancy over the individual. If the spirit is to be the master, and Maritain considers this to be the proper order of nature, then there must be discipline and control of the material or animal nature of man. The discipline of the material will free the spiritual. The work of the teacher is to guide this liberation. It is for this reason that Maritain is in favor of discipline, which must always be used for the good of the pupil. It must never be harsh or cruel, but rather positive and helpful.

The positive nature of the inducement to good work is one of the dis-

positions to be developed by the good teacher. This stands in accord with the findings of educational psychologists of the present time. Praise and reward for good actions are the best methods of motivation. Along with these qualities in the teacher, Maritain stresses the need of developing the power of original thought in the pupil. In this he agrees with the authorities in modern educational thought. He advises the teacher to make sure that the pupil thinks through the problems confronting him, and holds that, unless the pupil does this, the knowledge he gains will be of little use.

Finally, the teacher is advised to foster and respect that intellectual intuition, that direct approach to truth which is found at certain times in the reasoning of all young people and which is the outward sign of the inner power of the intellect. Maritain considers the liberal arts as the best means of promoting intellectual development and a liberal education as the proper one for the development of good intellectual habits.

When Maritain has examined the dynamics of education, the operation of the learning process, and the necessary dispositions of the teacher, he proceeds to a consideration of the ability of the pupil to receive instruction. He sees three distinct stages in the development of the student - childhood, adolescence, and maturity. Each stage has its personality characteristics and each demands a different emphasis on the part of the instructor. The child lives in the realm of imagination and needs instruction which is based on imagery and wonder. Other authorities agree in this, seeing the child as different from the adult, and advocating instruction which takes this difference into consideration.

Maritain contends that, even at the lowest level, the educative process is to be directed to the acquisition of truth, though the means taken must be those which will be effective at the child's intellectual level. All the approved means of modern education are to be used, visual education, interest-arousing

presentation, and controlled direction under the supervision of skillful teachers.

He criticizes modern educational thinking as over-stressing the physical elements in the child-education processes while ignoring or underestimating the spiritual development of the learner. Though he stresses the importance of the imagination, Maritain also sees a possible danger in over-stressing it without adequate controls, since the child lives so deeply in the realm of imagination that the dividing line between reality and imagination is not always clear to him, and the teacher must take precautions that such a distinction be made apparent to the child.

In the adolescent stage, the imagination ceases to be the primary element in the learning process and the adolescent becomes aware of and enamoured of truth. It is the business of the educator to see that this awakening delight in truth be encouraged, lest the searching intellect of the youth lose its enthusiasm and become weary of seeking truth among the uninteresting mass of dully-taught material. Some modern educators see education as a preparation for the daily work in which the youth will later engage. They would have the school prepare him for the work of life by teaching him the technicalities of industry rather than the fundamental activities of the intellect. Maritain stresses the delight and desire the adolescent feels in the acquisition of truth, rather than the perfection of the technicalities of the subject-matter which he studies. Maritain claims the emphasis should be on the wide field of the truth of the subject rather than on the detailed mastery of the science being learned.

While placing the emphasis on liberal rather than technical education, Maritain sees a very necessary place for the latter in the education of youth. He does claim a priority for the intellectual development over the mechanical training of the pupil. To carry out his theories as to the emphasis in education, he

would have the liberal arts stressed throughout, beginning in the lower years of the school and advancing to the higher levels of education. He would have philosophy and theology taught by all universities, though not made compulsory for all students, and not limited to any fixed system or school of thought.

Maritain sees the present condition of society as a direct result of the philosophy against which he has dedicated his life. Refusal to seek truth, denial of absolute standards and forgetfulness of the spirituality of man have produced the conditions which are regretted by the thinking men of the present. These conditions he sees as possible of correction through education. A realization of the worth of the individual, the democratic ideal, can come only through education for truth. It is only through correctness of thinking on the part of the individual that correctness of thinking in society will have a sound basis. It is only by instilling the true principles of moral thought that society can be regenerated and led to the freedom and value of democratic living.

The goods of democratic living are for all men, and it is the role of education to place them within the reach of all citizens. To Maritain, this means a liberal education since it is the best development of the intellectual powers of man. Thus it is the duty of the state authority to see that the rights and freedom of education are granted and preserved within the state.

Danger to educational freedom may arise if the state attempts to use its educational system to inculcate political ideas and shape its citizens in a political mould rather than to develop them intellectually. Maritain warns of this danger and points to the unhappy history of those European states which so debased education in the past. The best and surest means of advancing true democratic thinking and living is to allow the schools to carry on their work of intellectual training in the way in which they are best fitted to do so, with

state aid if necessary, but never with state interference in their proper work.

The training of the young citizens is the work of many agencies, of which the school is but one. All these agencies must be inspired with a desire to shape the young in the good ideals of life, showing by example the end to which they would guide the learner. Education is the formal presentation of the way of life which is most suitable for the realization of the personal worth and value of the individual. It is by right education that the errors of the past will be corrected and the promises of the future realized. It is for this end that Maritain outlines his theories of education. To this he has dedicated his life and his work. He writes that men of today may be spared the long and painful search that was necessary for him to find that which he sought.

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